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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

POWER IN GRAHAM GREENE'S NOVELS

BY

ROBERT B. SUMMERS

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

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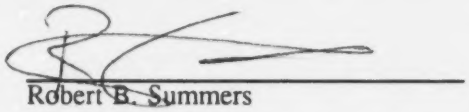

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For Tracey

"She taught me Turn, and Counter-turn, and Stand..."

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of Graham Greene's treatment of power in five of his novels, It's a Battlefield, A Gun for Sale, The Quiet American, Our Man in Havana, and The Human Factor. The principal argument of the present work, as expressed in the Introduction, is that the Leftist ideology to which Greene subscribes and the moral code that informs this ideology are intimately related to his conception of power. His own childhood experiences as an outsider and a victim have inspired in Greene a certain sympathy for the marginal individuals who most often fall prey to the harmful effects of institutionalized power. This sympathy is manifested in Greene's depictions of individuals who are alienated by power blocs and who, by various means, seek personal power in the public domain. The first two chapters explore the interrelations of power, crime and justice in It's a Battlefield and A Gun for Sale, as well as the social inequities that inform these interrelations. Chapters Three and Four address the opposition between humanism and hegemony that exists in Greene's work, and the manner in which Greene emphasizes human companionship in the struggle against inhuman hegemonies. More specifically, Chapter Three is a discussion of The Quiet American, the destructive capacity of innocence aligned with power, and the role of such innocence in the political realm. Chapter Four is a consideration of the relationship between power and knowledge in Greene's two spy novels, Our Man in Havana and The Human Factor. Since the explicit purpose of intelligence organizations is the collection of knowledge as a means to preserve and extend the power of the state, these novels afford Greene an opportunity to explore the relationship between power and knowledge.

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INTRODUCTION

Graham Greene has a reputation as a Catholic writer, and his principal interests are often regarded as theological in nature. Consequently an astonishing amount of criticism has been directed at the spiritual content of Greene's fiction. Unfortunately this emphasis on religion has resulted in a general neglect of the political dimension of Greene's work. Greene is sensitive to and has often denied the "Catholic" label: "Many times since Brighton Rock I have been forced to declare myself not a Catholic writer, but a writer who happens to be Catholic."[1] Elsewhere Greene reluctantly admits to the political tenor of his work: "I suppose I can be called a political writer when I tackle political subjects; but politics is in the air we breathe, like the presence or absence of God."[2] Greene recognizes that writing must always be a political act, since to live is to be political. Moreover, in comparing the political with the spiritual, he acknowledges that in human affairs the two are inseparable. Indeed, Greene seeks a symmetry of these dimensions in his fiction, for his novels invariably detail the conflicts of the political world, as well as those of the individual soul, the battles of everyday life, and the spiritual war waged within the individual conscience. For Greene the warring pluralities of the soul are echoed in those of the political realm, and the individual's struggle for inner power is manifested in political commitment.

Greene himself feels that his novels primarily follow a political pattern, that the "figure in the carpet," to use a Jamesian phrase of which Greene is fond, is a political and social one. "I know that people are supposed to grow reactionary with age, especially those who were most revolutionary at the outset. This is not true of me: I have always

inclined to the Left, ever since my first books, and my sympathies have consolidated with age. There's a certain coherence, a continuity between It's a Battlefield, Brighton Rock and The Honorary Consul: it's my concern with the possibility of social change."[3] Indeed, one need only recall that Greene was happily purchasing bullets for the Sandinistas at an age when most men are championing reactionary causes.[4] At any rate, Greene defines his contribution to literature and to society in terms of the conflicting political forces which have struggled for power since time immemorial; he suggests that his work should be considered within the context of this conflict, and that he himself should be regarded as a revolutionary combatant in the war of opposing political forces. This is of course the traditional role of the artist, one which Greene has fervidly embraced in his fiction as well as in his public life.

Consequently, one could hardly address the political dimensions of Greene's novels without discussing his treatment of power. Greene explores the socio-political power we exercise in the public sphere and the spiritual or psychological power, the "will to power," by which we rule ourselves. In the political sense, Greene might concur with Bertrand Russell who contends that power is the "fundamental concept in social science . . . in the same sense that Energy is the fundamental concept in physics."[5] In fact, few twentieth-century novelists have been more aware of this concept than Greene, for none have been as adept at depicting the often violent struggle for and over power which has marked the twentieth century as the bloodiest in history. According to George Woodcock, Greene's novels address "the fundamental struggle, in the process throughout the world today, between the individual and the collective, the common man and the state . . . .

Always he is in sympathy with the underdog, with the criminal against the society that warped him, with the rebel against the representatives of authority, with the poor against the rich and the meek against the mighty."[6] Although Woodcock made his assessment in 1949 when Greene's life work was a very long way from complete, his comments are as relevant to the second half of Greene's career as to the first.

Woodcock is certainly correct in suggesting that Greene's Leftist political thought is manifested principally in his sympathy with and support for the underdog, the victim, and the exile. Greene's praise of Charlie Chaplin's films might equally apply to Greene's novels: "Your films have always been compassionate towards the weak and the under-privileged; they have always punctured the bully."[7] In accepting the Shakespeare Prize from the University of Hamburg in 1969, Greene suggested that an expression of sympathy with the underdog is the writer's *raison d'etre*, that the writer's task is "to act as the devil's advocate, to elicit sympathy and a measure of understanding for those who lie outside the boundaries of state approval."[8] In this way, Greene insists, the writer makes a virtue of disloyalty, extending his support to those who require it most. The writer "stands for the victims and the victims change. Loyalty confines you to accepted opinions: loyalty forbids you to comprehend sympathetically your dissident fellows; but disloyalty encourages you to roam through any human mind."[9] Greene's novels are ample proof of his sympathy for dissidents and his allegiance to the Devil's Party, for they are populated with marginal and downtrodden individuals waging war with the mighty. England Made Me pits Anthony Ferrant, a small-time schemer, against Krogh, the wealthy and influential financier; In Ministry of Fear, as the London Blitz rages, Arthur

Rowe, who has mercifully murdered his ailing wife, is drawn into battle with a conspiracy of enemy agents; Raven, the disfigured criminal in A Gun for Sale, seeks revenge against the unscrupulous members of the armaments industry who have betrayed him; The Confidential Agent describes the contest between opposing agents from an unnamed country ravaged by civil war, and concentrates on the lonely plight of one agent in his effort to defeat the mysterious forces that conspire against him; a rag-tag band of rebels fight the dictatorship of Papa Doc Duvalier in The Comedians; the hero of The Human Factor betrays the faceless and amoral Secret Service for which he works. Again and again, Greene's heroes are people on the fringe of society, seeking escape from a variety of oppressive conditions, battling the power blocs which seek to crush them from above, and struggling to affirm the power within.

This affirmation, this will to power, is an essential ingredient in Greene's novels, and is related to Greene's concern with the individual's role in the political realm. Nietzsche's concept of the will to power is equivalent to modern psychological terms like "self-realization" and "self-actualization," and it is a "fundamental aspect of the life process."[10] Paul Tillich remarks, "The will to power is not the will to attain power over other men, but it is the self-affirmation of life and its self-transcending dynamics, overcoming internal and external resistance."[11] Yet Tillich's recognition of external resistance indicates a political dimension to the will to power. Indeed, Nietzsche himself acknowledged that self-becoming does not occur in a vacuum, but occurs instead in relation to the individual's active participation in the political process.

Individualism is a modest and still unconscious form of the "will to

> power"; here it seems sufficient to the individual to get free from an overpowering domination by society (whether that of the state or of the church). He does not oppose them as a person but as an individual; he represents all individuals against totality. That means: he instinctively posits himself as an equal to all individuals; what he gains in this struggle he gains not as a person but as a representative of the individuals against totality.[12]

For Nietzsche, the will to power, the means by which the individual fulfils his potential, is inextricable from political action, for the individual is defined by his struggle with dominant political forces. He fights to retain his identity in the face of these forces of totality whose function, as Nietzsche frequently suggested, was to establish order through conformity and unity, through the destruction of individualism. The will to power is the means by which we retain and glorify our identity, the means by which we transcend the limitations of society, government and self. Thus, will to power is often manifested in political rebellion, as Camus apparently recognized: "In every act of rebellion, the rebel simultaneously experiences a feeling of revulsion at the infringement of his rights and a complete and spontaneous loyalty to certain aspects of himself."[13] In other words, the rebel revolts against the intrusion of authoritative power, and combats that intrusion with the assertion of self, with the will to power. As Nietzsche's statement indicates, such an assertion has broad social implications, since the individual fights for justice not only on behalf of himself, but also on behalf of all the individuals comprising humanity, on behalf of humanity itself. One purpose of the present work is to demonstrate Greene's recognition of the individual as a political entity, struggling on behalf of his fellow individuals against the forces of totality, and the degree to which the individual's will to power, his journey to self-affirmation, has a political impact.

Other theorists of power are instructive on the role of the will to power in the political world, and concur with Nietzsche's views on the actualization of being through political involvement. Although expressed in radically different terms, the theories of Michel Foucault and Rollo May are useful for our consideration of Greene's treatment of power, for each suggests that the individual is defined by the power he exercises in the public as well as the private sphere. Foucault claims that "the individual with his identity and characteristics is the product of a relation of power exercised over bodies, multiplicities, movements, desires, forces."[14] Likewise, May believes that the individual is defined by the power to fulfil his potentials. In other words, May concurs with Kierkegaard's view that the individual is created by the conflict between potentiality and actuality: "Being is manifested only in the process of actualizing its power . . . . Power becomes actualized in those situations where opposition is overcome."[15] May contends that much of human life may be regarded as "the conflict between power on the one side (i.e. effective ways of influencing others, achieving the sense of interpersonal relations or the significance of one's self) and powerlessness on the other."[16] Considering the assertions of these writers, we may conclude that self-affirmation, or the will to power, is determined by one's participation in politics. Many of Greene's characters unsuccessfully resist participation in politics simply because, as Greene says, "politics is in the air we breathe" and to live is to be political.

Greene often demonstrates that the child's weakness sometimes precipitates the adult's quest for power; for Greene the excessive helplessness of childhood usually results in an exaggerated desire for power in adult life. This view probably arises from Greene's

own memories of childhood. His difficult life at Berkhamsted school, where his father was headmaster, is well-documented.[17] There he suffered from having to maintain a loyalty to his fellow students and to his father, who would naturally have been the sworn enemy of the students. For Greene, this "confusion of loyalties" was a source of immense pain. In A Sort of Life, Greene recalls his school days:

> Years later when I read the sermon on hell in Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist* I recognized the land I had inhabited. I had left civilization behind and entered a savage country of strange customs and inexplicable cruelties: a country in which I was a foreigner and a suspect, quite literally a hunted creature, known to have dubious associates. Was my father not the headmaster? I was like the son of a quisling in a country under occupation. My elder brother Raymond was a school prefect and head of the house--in other words one of Quisling's collaborators. I was surrounded by the forces of the resistance, and yet I couldn't join them without betraying my father and my brother. (72)

Greene expresses the loneliness of his early life in terms of exile, pursuit, and betrayal, all common elements of his fiction. There are obvious parallels between his childhood experience and those of his characters, anti-heroes who inhabit the no man's land between loyalty and betrayal, men like the Whiskey Priest in The Power and the Glory, D. in The Confidential Agent, and Maurice Castle in The Human Factor. That Greene never forgot the lessons of childhood is plainly evident in his last published novel, The Captain and the Enemy. Jim, the novel's hero, speaks of his early days as an Amalekite, an epithet applied to him by his fellow school-mates. Anybody who was perceived as weak earned this name, and suffered as an outcast and a loner. Indeed, according to Exodus, the Amalekites are defeated by the Israelites through divine intervention, for "The Lord will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation." Even God, it seems, has

little use for the Amalekites, and their terrible fate is exclusion from God's grace. In The Captain and the Enemy, Greene has simply given a name to the outcasts who have always populated the bleak landscape of his novels, exiled from human contact and, worse yet, divine compassion. Not surprisingly, Jim betrays his surrogate father, and Greene, as in so many of his novels, and for the last time here, recreates his own self-perceived role as Quisling.

Greene's childhood also afforded him an understanding of the interplay between the victim and the victimizer, and his own experience as a victim is closely aligned to his conception of power. Greene claims to have been both physically and mentally abused by a fellow student named Carter. Of Carter he writes:

> I admired his ruthlessness, and in an odd way he admired what he wounded in me. Between the torturer and the tortured arises a kind of relationship. So long as the torture continues the torturer has failed, and he recognizes an equality in his victim. I never seriously in later years desired revenge on Carter.[18]

In a sense, Greene has spent his career exploring the relationship of which he speaks here. He recognizes that there is a subtle exchange of power between the torturer and the tortured.[19] Moreover, the victims role as survivor can be an immense source of power in and of itself. Yet, Greene also depicts the strange and ironic triumphs of those who escape their various tormentors through death. One recalls Doctor Plarr, Father Leon (The Honorary Consul) and Raven (A Gun for Sale). Most especially, one recalls the Whiskey Priest, the Christ whose torture and ultimate martyrdom will restore the power and the glory of the real Church of the Human Heart, of human spirituality, of

individualism. And so the greatest victim may exercise the greatest power. As Greene says of Anthony Ferrant in England Made Me, "He was weakness, but weakness could be very strong" (137).

Greene's anti-heroes, his flawed marginal characters, often attempt to transcend their childhood helplessness or alienation, to achieve a greater sense of self, through political involvement. More specifically, these anti-heroes confront and fight entrenched institutions or systems of power, to establish their own identity, their own being. Invariably then, Greene's explorations of power focus on the confrontation between the individual and authority, and on the nature of conformity and rebellion, as defined by Nietzsche and Camus. Greene conducts these explorations through depictions of the hunted and the hunter, the victim and the tormentor, a narrative strategy he has employed with remarkable consistency throughout his career. This strategy is exemplified by The Power and the Glory in which the story of the hunted Whiskey Priest is elevated into a moving parable of good and evil. Set in one of Mexico's southern states in the mid 1930's, The Power and the Glory ostensibly describes the conflict between the Catholic Church and a post-revolutionary government, two rival collectives seeking control of the hearts and minds of the peasantry. Yet this conflict between Church and State is secondary. The real emphasis must be placed on Greene's portrayal of the Whiskey Priest as a hounded individual suffering the repressive policies of a totalitarian state. Greene contrasts the humanity of the priest with the inhumanity of the Lieutenant who pursues him. Thus the novel affords an example of the virtue of disloyalty; the Priest, although disloyal to the state, retains a fierce loyalty to human virtues, to love and

compassion, a loyalty which parallels that of Greene himself. The Lieutenant, on the other hand, remains loyal to a perverse Marxist ideology which denies human values, denies, in fact, the value of human life. The cost of defending such an ideology is invariably measured in innocent blood, for the kind of loyalty practised by the Lieutenant always finds its most profound expression in violence and destruction, as Greene re-iterates in The Quiet American with his portrayal of Alden Pyle.

The contrast between the humanity of the outcast and the inhumanity of hegemonic operatives is more and more evident in Greene's later work where the human factor becomes a dominant concern. The human factor is inextricable from the individualism Greene so values. It is an entity which very often confounds, impedes, or alters the influence of larger political or social forces. It is love versus power, love exchanged between two individuals versus the often destructive power of institutions and governments; it is loyalty to another human versus loyalty to a country, a flag, an institution, or an ideology; it is experience versus innocence, a knowledge of the world which encompasses evil rather than denying it. In short, the human factor consists of fundamental human ties which fortify the individual against the most harmful intrusions of state or institutional power.

Thus, in many of Greene's characters quietism is transformed into commitment and action, not by patriotism or ideology, but rather by a need to protect and preserve fragile human ties. In Greene's later works such commitment becomes an expression of faith in and respect for human life. Greene has always understood the political effect of such values, for depictions of political commitment based upon personal loyalty are not

limited to the later stages of his artistic development. For instance, in Ida Arnold's loyalty to the murdered Hale in Brighton Rock, and D.'s allegiance to Else in The Confidential Agent, we are afforded a glimpse of the humanism that sometimes emerges in the seedy world Greene depicts. Yet Greene's later novels constitute a gradual apotheosis of the human factor, for they consistently emphasize the importance of human companionship in the struggle against inhuman hegemonies. The Human Factor may be the summit of Greene's achievement in this respect, since it contrasts the noble ideas of Maurice Castle, the double-agent, with the entirely ignoble activities of the intelligence agency he betrays in loyalty to his wife.

Ultimately, an overview of Greene's work reveals a sentimental view of power in which the political world is divided between those who possess great power and those who possess very little. In such a world, the common man, warts and all, acquires nobility in squaring off against the repressive "machine" formed by the partnership of bureaucracy and big business. Consequently, Greene simply tends to view the dynamics of politics as an eternal series of struggles for power between the state and the individual. However, within this framework Greene admits that power, as "the fundamental concept of social science," is an entity to which every human being has access and is therefore the basis of every human relationship. Again, Foucault provides a model with which we may compare Greene's philosophy:

> There is a sort of schematism that needs to be avoided here . . . that consists in locating power in the State apparatus, making this into the major, privileged, capital and almost unique instrument of power of one class over another. In reality, power in its exercise goes much further, passes through much finer channels, and is more ambiguous, since each

> individual has at his disposal a certain amount of power, and for that reason can also act as the vehicle for transmitting a wider power.[20]

Greene rarely avoids the schematism of which Foucault speaks, for the dichotomy between the state and those at whom it directs its power is central to Greene's fiction. Like Nietzsche, Greene feels that the principal purpose of the state is to maintain order and enforce conformity, and that the state thus represents a dominant power at odds with individualism. For this reason, Greene has commented that government should be reduced to its smallest possible entity to allow for greater individual freedom and greater human contact.[21] Greene would nonetheless concur with Foucault's contention that the state is not a singular power, that it is not an apparatus designed solely for the repression of its constituents, and that the "finer channels" through which power passes may, in fact, amount to a greater and more diverse power. Indeed, Greene explores these finer channels in his frequent depictions of the struggle for power between individuals. Yet Greene understands that within these finer channels the state preserves its power through the efforts of *individuals* who support the state's policies. Greene's exploration of society's power network suggests that within this network, the state, as the dominant power, is subverted by the power of various individuals, and preserved and enlarged by others. Greene's anti-hero may not always be fighting this abstract and nebulous state apparatus, but he may be fighting the constituents of that apparatus, men and women who seek to preserve state totality, and thus their own power at the expense of another individual's power and well-being. The most obvious example is Fowler's conflict with Pyle in The Quiet American in which the struggle for power, in this case the efforts of

each to win the affection of Phuong, is essentially the struggle between Fowler, the individual, and Pyle, the agent of totality.

In accordance with Greene's division of the world into the powerful and the powerless, it should not be surprising that Greene has often demonstrated a fascination with authority figures. Indeed, his interest in power has found its most profound manifestation in his depiction of authoritarian governments and the strong-men who preserve them, and in his treatment of rulers, despotic and otherwise. In "A Man as Pure as Lucifer," Greene writes favourably of Ho Chi Mihn. Elsewhere, he has both praised Fidel Castro as a revolutionary and condemned him as a dictator. He admits an admiration for Chile's assassinated leader, Salvadore Allende. In Getting to Know the General, Greene writes of his friendships with the Panamanian leader Omar Torrijos and his security guard, Sergeant Chu Chu. On the other hand, Greene has publicly condemned Cuba's Batista, Generals Pinochet and Stroessner, and Havana's Duvalier regime. Of course, Greene's views of these leaders confirm his claim to be a revolutionary. For instance, in The Comedians and The Honorary Consul, Greene condemns the repressive regimes of Haiti and Paraguay, and supports the rebels who seek to subvert them. The present study is intended to explore this conflict between authority and the individual, as well as the struggles between individuals who represent the most harmful policies of the state and those who represent the moral values to which Greene has always subscribed. Only through the examination of his treatment of power within this moral framework can we appreciate Greene's status as a revolutionary.

1

POWER AND JUSTICE IN IT'S A BATTLEFIELD

Graham Greene calls his fourth novel, It's a Battlefield, his "first overtly political novel."[1] It depicts the gritty world of the Depression where lives pass in the shadows of the Factory and the Prison, the world of labour strikes and rallies, of Capitalist exploitation and Communist inefficiency, of downtrodden masses and the condemned individual. Into this world enters Jim Drover, a bus-driver who, at a Communist rally, kills a policeman he believes is going to strike his wife. Drover's subsequent death sentence and possible reprieve initiates various political manoeuvres and "little battles." Here is Greene's first genuine entry into that "seedy" region of human affairs for which he has become notorious, a region governed by the successes and failures of its combative inhabitants.

By Greene's own admission, It's a Battlefield remains one of his least read books. Yet the novel is significant for its exploration of many of the themes that preoccupied Greene throughout his career. Although Greene contends that the title is ironic rather than political,[2] It's a Battlefield is in fact a study of political power struggles conveyed in terms of war. In interpreting the novel, we would do well to recall Michel Foucault's inversion of Clauswitz's famous aphorism that war is simply politics by other means. For Foucault, politics is instead a continuation of war. The inverted aphorism "consists in seeing politics as sanctioning and upholding the disequilibrium of forces that was

displayed in war."[3] Foucault then would concur with Greene's characterization, ironic or otherwise, of society as a battlefield:

> [The inversion signifies that] none of the political struggles, the conflicts waged over power, for power, the alterations in the relations of forces, the favouring of certain tendencies, the reinforcements etc., etcs., that come about within this "civil peace"--that none of these phenomena in the political system should be interpreted except as a continuation of war. They should, that is to say, be understood as episodes, factions and displacements in that same war. Even when one writes the history of peace and its institutions, it is always the history of this war that one is writing.[4]

In It's a Battlefield Greene exposes the war fought under the guise of "civil peace," re-writing the history of peace as the history of minor skirmishes between individuals and groups seeking power in its various forms. In The Confidential Agent, D. ironically remarks that London "was technically known as a city at peace" (136). It's a Battlefield is an exploration of this sentiment. Appropriately, the novel's epigraph derived from A.W. Kinglake's "The Invasion of Crimea," describes an indefinite battlefield consisting of "small numberless circlets" of combatants fighting "in happy and advantageous ignorance of the general state of the action: nay even very often in ignorance of the fact that any great conflict was raging"(5). Since the novel depicts the political struggle to save Drover's life, the epigraph establishes Green's view of a political world engaged in a chaotic, indefinite war fought by other means.

In such a war, law replaces the gun, and justice becomes a powerful weapon in "upholding the disequilibrium of forces," to use Foucault's phrase. In this sense, Greene's claim that It's a Battlefield depicts "the injustice of men's justice" can be expanded to

include Foucault's notion of power. Throughout the novel, justice is subverted by the whims of those who seek to control justice and to use the legal system as a means to fulfil their own political aims. Thus, justice is exposed as a means to an end rather than an end unto itself, as a mechanism of power rather than a universally embraced ideal. Greene contends that as long as humans possess a greater desire for power than for justice, the administration of justice will remain merely a means to acquire or strengthen political power.

The first two characters encountered by the reader share a certain responsibility to administer justice, but possess perverted conceptions of what is just. The Assistant Commissioner of Police and the Home Minister's private secretary meet to discuss Drover's death sentence. The A.C. considers himself an apolitical enforcer of state laws, whose only job is "to get the right man" (7). He is a representative of the ruined British Empire, a former colonial policeman who, in the old days, was not above burning an entire village to ensure the death of a murderer (8). The A.C. is accustomed to the justice of the jungle colony, to the "man left dangling in the jungle for the birds to peck" (9). In short, he is accustomed to the brute force practised at the Empire's fringes where justice is whatever is most expedient, where the Empire's authority is maintained at whatever cost.

However, justice at the Empire's centre is no less corrupted than at the fringe, and although it lacks the expediency of jungle justice, it is no more merciful. In fact, it is only hypocritical. The Minister's private secretary sees justice as a political tool manipulated to maintain his party's power and to satisfy his personal ambitions. For the

secretary, Drover's sentence is only important for its political impact. He is concerned that Drover's death will be seen as the ruling party's "confession of weakness," or a cause for more labour strikes. He admits that a longer strike could "cost the country fifty million," in which case, "More taxes and we lose the next election. What happens then? . . . . No peerage for the Minister anyway. And no under-secretaryship for me" (12-3). The secretary is entirely motivated by a ruthless thirst for personal power, and measures an individual's life only by its current political value.

This code of ethics is condemned by Conder, one of Greene's typically pathetic journalists who live at, and speak for society's fringe. Conder recognizes the inscrutability of human justice. He knows that the world is governed "by the whims of a few men, the whims of a politician, a journalist, a bishop and a policeman. They hanged this man and pardoned that; one embezzler was in prison, but the other men of the same kind were sent to Parliament" (39). Worse still, the individual's fate may be decided by accidental occurrences in the lives of a powerful few. The minister may grant a pardon because he recognizes the name of the condemned, although he does not actually know the name of the individual; or the minister has had his ego inflated by an adoring crowd, arousing usually dormant "democratic" feelings; or perhaps his belly is full and he has drunk too much wine (40). Conder suspects all of these occurrences may stimulate a merciful judgement, but an intelligent weighing of facts seems the least likely source of mercy or justice.

Inherent in the recognition of power's corruption of justice is Greene's own sympathy for those who must bear the brunt of injustice. Above all else, It's a Battlefield

is an expression of sympathy for the alienated individual, particularly the low-rung workers brutalized by the conditions of an industrialized but economically depressed society. Under such conditions, the worker is alternately ignored and manipulated by various state institutions, and exploited by the politically ambitious factions of both the Left and the Right. Nonetheless, Greene supports the individual, and therefore, very often expounds the virtues of socialism. Indeed, one senses something of Greene's socialist sympathies in one or two of his characters. In one instance, Caroline Bury questions the injustice of the English economy:

> "Do you believe in the way this country is organized? Do you believe that wages should run from thirty shillings a week to fifteen thousand a year, that a manual labourer should be paid less than a man who works with his brains? They are both indispensable, they both work the same hours, they are both dog tired at the end of the day." (189)

On another occasion the Assistant Commissioner admits to himself the inequities of a justice system that favours the property-owner:

> The laws were made by property owners in defence of property; that was why a Fascist could talk treason without persecution; that was why a man who defrauded the State in defence of his private wealth did not lose the money he gained; that was why the burglar went to gaol for five years; that was why Drover could not so easily be reprieved--he was a Communist. (169)

Perhaps Greene's most explicit expression of support for the worker occurs in his comparisons between the prison and the factory, two institutions in which the individual is dehumanized through conformity, confinement and surveillance. In Power/Knowledge, Foucault concurs with his interviewer's observations that instruments of power, such as

prisons, schools, barracks, and by extension, factories, and offices, have similar social structures, and that they often display strikingly similar architectural designs.[5] The same point is made in It's a Battlefield when the Minister's secretary mistakes a girl's school for a prison (17), and an execution shed for a gymnasium (20). Similarly, the prison in which Drover awaits his punishment is compared to the match factory in which his sister-in-law, Kay Rimmer, is subjected to the mindless drudgery of modern mass production. Both institutions are divided into three blocks through which the occupants are moved, the prisoners according to their behaviour, the workers according to their skill. The living conditions of the workers and the prisoners are the same. After all, Drover's jail cell is not so very different from the steel cage in which he was confined as a bus-driver; whether awaiting his execution or earning a meagre living, Drover's life is measured by confinement.

Though his comparison of the factory with the prison is intended primarily to equate the worker with the prisoner, Greene also reveals an awareness for the subtle ways in which such systems of control disrupt the simplest forms of human contact. In one instance, the warder describes the "telephone boxes" through which the prisoner talks with his visitors: they are designed with a "wire on the side, glass in the front" which means that the prisoner cannot see his visitor and talk to him simultaneously. "Cunning, ain't it?" the warder proudly asks. "After a year, of course, if they've behaved well, we allow 'em to embrace" (19). The "telephone box" is indeed a cunning method of control by which natural communication is impeded and monitored. Likewise, the noise of the machines in the factory does not permit the workers to converse in a normal manner.

Instead they must communicate, somewhat absurdly, through a system of eye-blinkings (28). The human capacity for speech, a powerful weapon against the forces of totality, is thus impeded by the factory as well as by the prison. In this manner, Greene is able to further equate the barred windows, high fences and barbed wire of the prison with the less obvious, but equally repressive conditions of the factory. Although there is a lack of subtlety in these comparisons, they convey Greene's hatred of the most repressive aspects of state institutions and his affection for the individual, his disdain for systems of power, and his support for the victims of such systems.

Green subscribes to the theory that the individual often comes into being as a soldier in the war against power blocs, as well as through more refined power relations. Thus, the characters of It's a Battlefield are defined by the ways in which they seek and forfeit power. One such character is Mr. Surrogate whose political activity is motivated by feelings of his own inferiority. With Surrogate, Greene ridicules the well-heeled "Communist" who is motivated by vanity and personal ambition rather than by a selfless desire to improve the lot of the worker. Indeed, Surrogate's name implies that he is merely a substitute, an impostor playing the role of the workers' advocate. Caroline Bury, Surrogate's friend, understands that Surrogate's "Marxist" philosophy is founded upon a lifetime of inadequacy and humiliation. She recognizes that his inability to conceal anything had humiliated him so often that he had needed to form a philosophy of humiliation, to found his career upon self-exposure. "'Be humble that you may be exalted,' and from the depth of humility he would spring refreshed to the height of pride" (34). From a life of failure, Surrogate extracts a philosophy of personal power, escaping

into a world of intellectual abstractions. Consequently, when Surrogate speaks at a Communist rally, his voice drowns out the realities of Drover's imprisonment. Surrogate "had no picture in his mind of the condemned cell, the mask, the walk to the shed; he saw Caesar fall and heard Brutus speak" (42). He imagines himself a slayer of regents, and therefore regards Drover as a puny sacrifice, as a name invoked to stir the peasants from their lethargy in the service of Surrogate, the leader. But Surrogate's speech is nothing more than the empty, self-deluding rhetoric by which means he is able to imagine himself a powerful and successful revolutionary, the hero of the downtrodden masses of whom he is entirely ignorant. He has no understanding of the people he claims to champion, only a desire for self-aggrandizement. Here, as in his later novels, Greene bitterly criticizes the demagogic dependence upon ideology in the pursuit of power; Greene seems to say, "Beware of those who are loyal to ideology rather than to individuals, for they pose the greatest danger." Ironically, after Surrogate loses a debate with Bennett, he wonders "whether all movements end in a scrimmage of individuals for leadership" (43).

Jim Drover's brother, Conrad, is the most fully realized character of It's a Battlefield, and the one in whom the quest for power, for selfhood, is most defined. His efforts to save his brother are as motivated by feelings of inadequacy as by love. Through Conrad, Greene explores the terrible helplessness of childhood and the adult's ensuing quest for power in the public sphere. The brothers are portrayed in a rather schematic manner whereby Conrad possesses "the brains," and Jim, the physical strength. As a child Conrad's intelligence made him an easy mark for the cruelty of other children.

> Brains had only meant that he must work harder in the elementary school and suffer more in the secondary school than those born free of them. At night he could still hear the malicious chorus telling him that he was a favourite of the masters, mocking him for the pretentious name that his parents had fastened on him, like a badge of brains since birth. Brains, like a fierce heat, turned the world to a desert round him, and across the sands in the occasional mirage he saw stupid crowds, playing, laughing, and without thought enjoying the tenderness, the companionship of love. (32-3)

Conrad has spent his early life in the same savage land to which Greene refers when speaking of his own childhood, a hell in which a child may be cast out and subjected to the "inexplicable cruelties" of other children. These cruelties have followed Conrad into adult life. "Conrad sat at a desk aware of the hatred behind him, in the school, in the office: the cold recognition of his efficiency through the glass door of the headmaster's room, of the manager's room: Conrad earned six pounds a week" (59). The alienation associated with a lifetime of exile partially accounts for Conrad's obsessive efforts to save his brother, for with this single self-assertive act, Conrad would counteract a lifetime of impotence and frustration, and acquire something of his brother's brawny power. Indeed, by making love to Jim's wife, Milly, Conrad seems to be attempting to appropriate his brother's power.

In any case, Conrad and Milly forge a relationship based upon alienation and impotence: "There was nothing that either of them had been able to do for his brother; they had come together in their admiration and impotence, sitting as it were in his shadow away from the world which rocked and roared around them" (59). Conrad and Milly are isolated from the hubbub of the world, from the influential players of political games who might otherwise be able to assist them in their quest to save Jim. Conrad is "daunted by

his own and Milly's insignificance," and by their exclusion from "the world humming with the voices of generals and politicians, bishops and surgeons and schoolmasters . . . the world humming and vibrating with the pulling of wires" (64). They are alienated, in short, from the world of power.

In the two instances when Conrad and Milly attempt to enter into this world, Greene reveals the "fine channels" through which power passes, to use Foucault's phrase.[6] Greene has claimed that he develops plot through key scenes which consist in "isolating two characters," whereby he can direct their every movement.[7] Greene very often expresses conflict in these scenes entirely in terms of power, presenting his characters as vehicles of power, "simultaneously undergoing and exercising power."[8] Two such scenes in It's a Battlefield are Milly's confrontation with the policeman's widow, Mrs. Coney, and Conrad's meeting with the pawnbroker, Mr. Bernay.

In the scene with Milly and Mrs. Coney, Greene deftly integrates political issues and concepts of the law and justice with the personal dilemmas facing the two women. Greene sets the scene with Milly contemplating her affinity with Mrs. Coney, and the law's treatment of the class to which the two women belong.

> They were two women of the same class who could talk things over and come to an understanding. It was gentle folk who had broken in with the laws they had made themselves. . . . A death for a death--the law demanded this, but the law had not been made by Jim or Mrs. Coney or herself, it had been made by kings and priests and lawyers and rich men . . . . Milly had read the words, "Judgement by your peers." She thought they meant by your lords and had been laughed at for thinking so, "It means judgement by your equals," but where, she asked now of Mrs. Coney, was a judge who was their equal, a man of three pounds a week, who lived as they lived? And the jury? Tradesmen and gentlemen. It wasn't fair. (97)

Although Milly and Mrs. Coney belong to the same class, Mrs. Coney is a woman governed by a different code of ethics, one based upon passivity. Her husband sometimes hit her; she believes in the law; she is "inadequate to anything but submission" (98). Consequently, Mrs. Coney is reluctant to sign a petition asking for Jim's reprieve: "I don't like to trouble his Majesty," she says (99). Yet recognizing that Milly needs help, Mrs. Coney feels a new sensation: she "for the first time in her life was tasting power. Though submission always satisfied her, there was something novel in the taste which thinned her lips" (98-9). A taste of power can make amends for a lifetime of submission. Mrs. Coney becomes still more stubborn when she discovers that Jim is a Communist. "I wouldn't raise a finger to save a Red. . . . They want to take everything from us" (99). For Mrs. Coney, the "Reds" are a threat to her meagre possessions as well as to a lifetime of carefully constructed beliefs in the sanctity of the status quo, however unjust the current state of affairs may be. Thus, she aligns herself with a class to which she does not belong, and imagines the promotions her dead husband will never receive, promotions which might indeed have altered her social status. The small amount of power Mrs. Coney holds over Milly is but a shadow of the power she had hoped to derive from her husband's vocation. She refuses to sign the petition. Nonetheless, Milly finally gets Mrs. Coney's signature in return for preventing Conder, the journalist, from entering Mrs. Coney's house. Ultimately, blackmail succeeds where persuasion had failed, the use of coercive power triumphs where beggary had no effect.

Thus, Milly successfully plays the game of pulling wires, and is momentarily intoxicated by the discovery of her power to influence. "She didn't want to sign, but I

made her sign. I feel as if there's nothing I can't do," she tells Conrad (116). But Conrad, frustrated with his inability to earn a reprieve for Jim, and consumed with guilt for having slept with his brother's wife, embarks upon a desperate plan to murder the Assistant Commissioner. His plan eventually leads him into a confrontation with Mr. Bernay, a fraudulent pawnbroker.

Conrad's sense of isolation and insignificance is heightened on the day of his brother's sentencing when he overhears the Assistant Commissioner and the private secretary laughing at a meaningless joke:

> And afterwards in Piccadilly, on the steps of Berkeley, he had heard the thin man with a jaundiced face say, "A pram on top of a taxi," and laugh. Conrad Drover had recognized him. On the same day his brother's fate was decided, the Assistant Commissioner could laugh at a stupid joke. His brother was just one of many men strung up for justice. (60)

The encounter suggests the frustration and embarrassment we sometimes feel when others laugh at a joke we do no not understand. "A pram on a taxi" is a phrase which comes to symbolize Conrad's alienation from the powerful forces which govern his life, from the administrators of justice who laugh even as they sentence his brother to death. The joke becomes a steady drum-beat in Conrad's consciousness, urging him towards revenge against those pulling the wires.

Consequently, Conrad sets out to purchase a gun. Since he does not possess a licence for a fire-arm, he attempts to blackmail Mr. Bernay into selling him a gun. Mr. Bernay is a pawn-broker who has cheated the insurance company for which Conrad works. Unlike Milly's encounter with Mrs. Coney, the meeting between Conrad and Mr.

Bernay is particularly fascinating for the way in which Greene depicts the struggle for power between people of two different social classes. After introducing himself as an employee of the insurance company, Conrad takes pleasure in the power his credentials afford him: "He knew the kind of thoughts which were passing through the other's head, and the knowledge gave him a sense of power. The other was neatly dressed, was well-off, was a Church-goer, wore starched-cuffs on Sunday, but a few words rendered him speechless" (156-7). For a moment, Conrad is the social leper turning the tables on the prosperous and respected business man. From Conrad's point of view, Mr. Bernay represents bourgeois respectability and success; he possesses that peculiar middle-class habit of attending church in order to display personal wealth rather than to enjoy a communion with God. One is reminded of Green's comparison made in both The Lawless Roads and The Other Man, between the grandeur and piety of the peasant church-goers of Mexico and the counterfeit piety of the Chelsea congregation: " I would compare the worshippers [of Mexico] with the polite little congregation in Chelsea . . . and the ladies in hats, and I'd feel that religion was the peasant approaching the alter on his knees, his arms outstretched as though crucified.[9] Mr. Bernay remains firmly within the spiritual tradition of the Chelsea church-goer.

Nonetheless, Mr. Bernay uses his status as a successful merchant to regain authority over Conrad who has claimed to require a gun because he is "so much alone." Mr. Bernay responds that he is never alone. "His face was temporarily lighted by the lamps of innumerable social occasions. He permitted Conrad to glimpse vistas of red carpet, to stare like an outcast through the lit windows from his own darkness and

loneliness" (157). It seems that Mr. Bernay belongs to a club from which Conrad is forever excluded, and the pawnbroker uses his membership to control Conrad. In the end Conrad must promise to help Mr. Bernay with his insurance claims before the other will sell him a gun. The gun itself becomes an emblem of power, one for which Conrad must beg and one which Bernay confers only with a certain gracious magnanimity. Of course, power which is given as a gift rather than simply taken is not in fact power, but debt. Conrad thus forfeits all the power which he had seized at the meeting's outset, and is once again reduced to a helpless, frustrated man.

The gun itself becomes the remedy for a lifetime of impotence: Conrad thinks it is "something with which to frighten people who push me on the pavement, who want my job, who call 'Conrad, Conrad' across the asphalt yard, who threaten me, who hang my brother, who do not . . . take me seriously, as a man, as a chief clerk, as a lover. You cannot frighten me with the name murderer; a murderer is only Jim, a murderer is strength, protection, love" (160). As Rollo May observes, "Violence is the expression of impotence."[10] However, for Conrad, the gun is more than simply a means to restore personal power. He imagines the gun as a means of violent protest against accepted notions of criminality and justice, against a social system in which justice is truly blind, a system willing to sacrifice all that Jim Drover possesses for the sake of the law. For Conrad the gun becomes an instrument of justice and a "power" that others envy (177-8).

Ultimately, Conrad's plot to kill the A.C. ends in his own death. He is struck by an automobile just as he fires the gun. Ironically, since the gun is loaded with blanks, Conrad fails even as an assassin. Greene's depiction of Conrad's lonely death is a

triumph of writing in that it so successfully conveys the tragic conclusion of a sad life.

> He never knew he screamed in spite of his broken jaw; but with curious irrelevance, out of the darkness, after they had left him and his pulses had ceased beating and he was dead, consciousness returned for a fraction of a second, as if the brain had been a hopelessly shattered mirror, of which one piece caught a passing light. He saw and his brain recorded the sight: twelve men lying uneasily awake in the public ward with wireless headpieces clamped across their ears, and a nurse reading under a lamp, and nobody beside his bed. (197)

The twelve men, the mock jurors of the public ward, are not unlike their genuine counterparts and the society they represent, for, as the symbolic executors of justice they remain oblivious to the victims of human injustice. Greene's final twist of the screw, the final irony of <u>It's a Battlefield</u>, is that Jim Drover is reprieved even as his brother dies alone.

2

POWER AND CRIME IN A GUN FOR SALE

A Gun for Sale, published in 1936, reflects the contemporary political climate of impending war. While it is a lean, fast paced thriller, its political content is just as intriguing and relevant as that of a "serious" novel like It's a Battlefield. Raven, the hired killer, very nearly starts a war when he assassinates the Socialist War Minister of an unnamed European country. He discovers that his employer, an armaments manufacturer, has paid him in stolen notes, and that the police are pursuing him for passing them. Raven subsequently vows revenge against his employers and pursues his enemies to Nottwich, a fictitious town modeled after Nottingham. There, as the police close in on him, Raven exacts a bloody revenge upon his duplicitous employers. As with It's a Battlefield, Greene integrates personal and political themes. He portrays a social leper born into a tragic life from which death is the only escape, an outcast seeking redemption as the world about him prepares for war. Indeed, Raven's personal war reflects the conflicts of the world: "Why should I care if there's a war?" He asks, "There's always been a war for me" (29).

Of course, the two wars of which Raven speaks are related. There is a connection between the armed conflicts which threaten the world and the war waged by the rich and the powerful against the poor and weak. As in It's a Battlefield, Greene exhibits a Leftist political agenda here; he sees the connections between Capitalist exploitation and global

conflict, the armaments industry and poverty, the wealthy industrialist, Sir Marcus, and the outlaw, Raven. The novel's title first establishes these connections: Greene cleverly refers to Raven's automatic pistol, to the armaments of Sir Marcus, and to the mercenary nature of their respective employments (something which the American title, This Gun For Hire, fails to do). For Raven and Sir Marcus, the gun is an emblem of power and wealth. At first, Raven regards the gun as simply a tool of the trade, an instrument with which he can earn enough money to live. Later, after he has been betrayed, the gun becomes for him a greater source of power, a weapon directed against the economic and social forces which have conspired against him all his life. These forces are embodied in Sir Marcus. Indeed, Sir Marcus's feeble body represents both the corrupt nature of the body politic, and the moral degeneration of his own person. For Sir Marcus the armament sales likely to arise from a war are a means to augment his power and wealth at the cost of the suffering masses. Raven's war becomes one fought by an outcast against the establishment on behalf of all, where positions are reversed, and the hunted man becomes the hunter preying upon the powerful. Ultimately, crime is the principal nexus between Sir Marcus and Raven, for they have both chosen to earn a living from crime. By establishing this nexus, Greene again explores the relationship between power and justice, and demonstrates that to understand a society, one should examine its criminals. In this case he does so by comparing two criminals, one wealthy and powerful, the other poor and powerless. By the novel's conclusion there is little doubt who of these is more deserving of our sympathy.

In many ways, Raven's character parallels that of Conrad in It's a Battlefield.

Like Conrad, Raven believes that power grows from the barrel of a gun. For each violence is the only viable response to a lifetime of impotence, a self-assertive quest for personal power. Closely aligned with this feeling of impotence is the acknowledgement of an unjust world opposed to the justice of the human heart, an opposition between what is and what ought to be. Both Conrad and Raven see violence as a means to restore justice to a world they perceive as essentially unjust. The quest for power as a personal vendetta becomes for them a war waged on behalf of society; their desire for justice shifts from the private to the public domain. In A Gun For Sale, this transformation becomes evident as Raven approaches his meeting with Sir Marcus and the fulfilment of his revenge: "There was a kind of lightheartedness now about his malice and hatred that he had never known before; he had lost his sourness and his bitterness; he was less personal in his revenge. It was almost as though he were acting for someone else" (149). Raven becomes, to use Nietzsche's words, "a representative of individuals against totality."[1] According to Camus, this is precisely the role of the rebel who "opposes the principle of justice he finds in himself to the principle of injustice which he sees being applied to the world."[2] The anti-heroes of much of Greene's work invariably share a view of the world as unjust and consequently they assume the role of rebels in the manner Camus describes. Greene himself feels that this is particularly evident in his descriptions of Pinkie, the anti-hero of Brighton Rock, and his prototype, Raven:

> [Raven] is a Pinkie who has aged but not grown up. The Pinkies are the real Peter Pans--doomed to be juvenile for a lifetime. They have something of a fallen angel about them, a morality which once belonged to another place. The outlaw of justice always keeps in his heart the sense of justice outraged--*his* crimes have an excuse and yet he is pursued by the

> Others. The Others have committed worse crimes and flourish. The world is full of Others who wear masks of Success, of a Happy Family. Whatever crime he may be driven to commit the child who doesn't grow up remains the great champion of justice. "An eye for an eye." "Give them a dose of their own medicine." As children we have all suffered punishments for faults we have not committed, but the wound has soon healed. With Raven and Pinkie the wound never heals.[3]

One senses that the punishments of Greene's own childhood have influenced his views regarding justice, views which do not differ that greatly from that of Pinkie and Raven. After all, Greene takes apparent delight in depicting the punishments inflicted on Sir Marcus by Raven, the wronged child. Naturally then, Greene regards the adult's response to childhood experience as the principal factor in the formation of personality, and in the portraits of Pinkie and Raven, childhood misfortune inspires the search for justice and power, however misguided the method. Greene's childish criminals feel that the crimes of the outlaw are justified by the crimes committed with impunity by the powerful. They ask why they should suffer as outlaws while their powerful, but no less criminal counterparts, Colleoni and Sir Marcus, flourish.

Like Pinkie, both Conrad and Raven derive their conceptions of justice from their experience as outsiders. One is marginalized by intelligence, the other by the physical deformity of a hare-lip, a deformity which carries considerable symbolic weight throughout the novel. The lip "was like a badge of class. It reveals the poverty of parents who couldn't afford a clever surgeon" (14). For Raven, it is also a secret source of power; he takes some pride in its obvious effect upon others: "He let the hare-lip loose on the girl when she came towards him with the same pleasure that he might have felt turning a machine-gun on a picture gallery" (14). Raven regards his deformity as a

weapon, an ugliness which can overcome all beauty.

Even by Greene's standards, Raven's childhood is particularly brutal. His father was a criminal who was eventually hanged, and his mother cut her own throat leaving her blood-soaked body for Raven to discover. After that, he was raised in "one of His Majesty's homes" (121). Raven remembers his childhood as a series of punishments: "solitary confinement for a kid that's caught talking in the chapel and the birch for almost anything you do. Bread and water. A Sergeant knocking you around if you try to lark a bit" (121). Here then is the irony of Raven's frequent claims to be educated, for by making such a claim, he hopes to have a degree of power, to be recognized as a member of society. Yet the abusive nature of his education has contributed to the dysfunctional personality that prevents his entrance into society. Even as society seeks universal membership, one of its principal functions, the state itself creates institutions which ensure the exclusion of certain individuals. Thus Raven is society's rejected child, formed by early tragedy, corrupted by a government sponsored education in which the effects of brute force constitute his principal lessons, and released into society, a malevolent reminder of society's transgressions against the poor and the innocent.

Greene demonstrates that the impetus for political involvement, whether violent or peaceful, is usually inspired in the individual by private rather than public concerns. According to Greene, the Depression precipitated a widespread loss of faith in the ineffective programs of government, leading to the decline of the patriot and the ascendancy of the anarchist.

Patriotism had lost its appeal, even for a schoolboy, at Passchendaele, and

> the Empire brought first to mind the Beaverbrook Crusader, while it was difficult, during the years of the Depression, to believe in the high purposes of the City of London or of the British Constitution. The hunger marches seemed more real that the politicians. It was no longer a Buchan world. The hunted man of A Gun for Sale, which I began to write, was Raven not Hannay; a man out to revenge himself for all the dirty tricks of life, not to save his country.[4]

In other words, Raven is the new hero, an outcast representing the disenfranchised of the hunger marches for whom loyalty to king and country is meaningless. Raven's violent political involvement is inspired entirely by his lifelong exclusion from the political process, by having been alternately ignored and abused by the state from which he should have deserved protection instead.

It is appropriate then that Raven, as something of a Frankenstein monster, should ultimately administer justice, that the crimes of the state should be revisited upon one of its most influential and most corrupt exponents, Sir Marcus Stein. Sir Marcus is one of Greene's earliest and most corrupt agents of totality, a man determined to preserve his wealth and power, and the supremacy of his class. He represents the worst aspects of a predatory market economy, for he is willing to ignite a war to create business for Midland Steel. In fact, Greene's portrait of Sir Marcus mirrors a contemporary preoccupation with war profiteers and the dangers of arms traffic. Ivan Melada writes that approximately forty books and articles on the munitions industry were published in many languages between 1930 and 1933, many of which posited the private arms manufacturer as the greatest threat to global peace.[5] In 1935, a British royal commission was established to conduct an inquiry into the war trade, and a Senate committee convened for a similar purpose in the United States. Greene admits to having attended the British hearings and

to having read a biography of Sir Basil Zaharoff, the most notorious arms dealer of the time. Although Greene claims that Sir Marcus is not Sir Basil, "the family resemblance is plain."[6]

Greene has always reserved an especially low regard for the captains of industry and their state operatives who profit from war. In The Confidential Agent, Greene depicts the unscrupulous behaviour of English coal barons who will supply their product to the highest bidder of two warring parties in a foreign civil war. The Human Factor has the American and European intelligence community conspiring to sell nuclear arms to South Africa so that the current South African government can maintain power, and global economic conditions can be preserved. On a small scale, but for similar economic reasons, Alden Pyle, the quiet American, supplies explosives to terrorists in South Vietnam. Moreover, some of Greene's most memorable letters to the press have addressed the immorality of the arms industry and the countries that profit from it. For instance, in a letter to *The Times* in January, 1959, Greene criticizes the British government for providing export permits to arms dealers, thus "happily supplying" the Cuban dictator Batista with a means by which to kill his own people.[7] In 1980, Greene wrote another such letter to *The Times*, claiming that in the aftermath of nationalized arms traffic, "Mrs Thatcher has taken on the role of Zaharoff" in supporting Pinochet in Chile, another dictator who, according to Greene, "needs the arms to support his internal control."[8] Greene frequently contends that the gun is all too often employed by dictators against their own people to preserve their regimes and consolidate power in the name of stability. Greene's final word on arms traffic appears in The Other Man, where he

remarks, "Nowadays the state profits just as shamelessly from the international arms race, and moral sense has gone by the board."[9] Greene suggests the beginning of such state involvement in arms traffic in his portrait of Sir Marcus who seems to enjoy the tacit approval of the English government.

> Armament shares continued to rise, and with them steel. It made no difference at all that the British Government had stopped all export licenses; the country itself was now absorbing more armaments than it had ever done since the peak year of Haig's assaults on the Hindenburg Line. Sir Marcus had many friends, in many countries; he wintered with them regularly at Cannes or in Soppelsa's yacht off Rhodes; he was the intimate friend of Mrs Cranbeim. It was impossible now to export arms, but it was still possible to export nickel and most of the other metals which were necessary to the arming of nations. Even when war was declared, Mrs Cranbeim had been able to say quite definitely that . . . the British Government would not forbid the export of nickel to Switzerland and other neutral countries so long as the British requirements were first met. So the future was rosy indeed, for you could trust Mrs Cranbeim's word. She spoke directly from the horse's mouth, if you could so describe the elder statesman whose confidence she shared. (115-16)

In his cosy association with government officials, Sir Marcus seems as relevant today as in the 1930's, especially when one recalls the recently disclosed activities of Gerald Bull.[10]

Sir Marcus's role as war-profiteer is largely symbolic of the destructiveness of mammonism, for he is simply another of Greene's powerful industrialists whose activities counteract and ultimately destroy everything of value in the human condition. One recalls the pitiful megalomania of Herr Krogh in England Made Me whose power is manifested in the five floors of steel and glass in which he maintains an "Arctic isolation" from even the simplest of pleasures, and from genuine human contact (35). His criminal activities

lead to the death of his lover's brother, and thus to a profound alienation from the only real companionship he has known. Both Sir Marcus and Herr Krogh prepare us for the absurd Doctor Fischer, the toothpaste king whose alienation is manifested in the dinner parties he conducts in order to degrade the greedy sycophants who attend. Yet Fisher's most heinous act is to withhold affection from his daughter, and like Krogh, to terminate his only human contact of value. In this sense, all three represent the forces of totality which destroy love and beauty in their obscene pursuit of wealth and power.

As with Herr Krogh and Dr. Fischer, Sir Marcus's activities are mysterious and his past shady. Indeed, in his portrayal of Sir Marcus, Greene appears to be suggesting the inscrutability of power. "Everyone knew a lot about Sir Marcus. The trouble was, all that they knew was contradictory" (109). His ethnic background and his family history are subjects of dispute, and there are gaps in official records which prevent any accurate accounting of his life. "There was even a gap in the legal records of Marseilles where one rumour said that Sir Marcus as a youth had been charged with theft from a visitor to a bawdy house. Now he sat there in the heavy Edwardian dining-room brushing biscuit crumbs from his waistcoat, one of the richest men in Europe" (109). Regardless of its veracity, this rumour of an early foray into crime is the most intriguing aspect of Sir Marcus's history. It seems that the petty thief who profited from his association with whores now reaps much greater profits from his relationship with whores of a different colour, the politicians and statesmen who would sell the world's peace for a few coins. Was the young Sir Marcus in fact a pimp dipping too far into the pockets of his customers? Whatever the truth, Sir Marcus remains a criminal, and the prosecuted thief

has become the affluent gentleman, one of the "Others" whose crimes remain undetected and therefore unpunished.

Ironically, Sir Marcus now regards the law which once threatened him as a tool to preserve his power. This is evident in a scene where he tries to get Major Calkin, the Chief Constable of Nottwich, to issue shoot-to-kill orders against Raven. Sir Marcus promises the Major a promotion and an appointment to the training depot once war erupts. The Major balks, and Sir Marcus attempts extortion where bribery had failed; he tells Major Calkin that a demotion can be arranged as easily as a promotion. Still, the Major is too timid to make a decision, to reject or accept Sir Marcus's offer. Instead, he sits "doing nothing, a small plump bullying henpecked profiteer" (114). Sir Marcus fails for once in his attempt to employ the state's power for his personal gain.

In accordance with the Leftist political agenda evident in the portrayals of Raven and Sir Marcus, A Gun for Sale reveals Greene's fear of the growing power of Fascism in Europe. Greene had shown a certain understanding of the seductiveness of Fascism in It's a Battlefield with his portrait of Jules, the young Communist.[11] Jules "wanted something that he could follow with passion, but Communism was talk and never action, and patriotism puzzled him . . . He wanted someone to say to him, 'Do this. Do that. Go here. Go there.' He wanted to be saved from the 'Weights' and the heartless flippancy of the cafe" (41). Jules's willingness to submit to the leadership of an active political movement principally results from the feelings of inadequacy he experiences as a counterman in a coffee shop, as an unskilled labourer. Similarly, in A Gun For Sale, Greene alludes to the para-military law-enforcement organization to which Mather

belongs, one in which the members exercise, and submit to, power. The individual's desire to belong to such a group is emphasized by the story of Mather's brother who commits suicide. "More than Mather he needed to be a part of an organization, to be trained and given orders, but unlike Mather he hadn't found his organization" (86). For Jules and Mather's brother alike, being part of a group necessarily entails following a leader, being controlled and moulded by the policies of a highly-structured organization" (86). Milan Kundera's novel, The Unbearable Lightness of Being, may illuminate this human impulse towards submission. Kundera distinguishes between weight and lightness, between burden and the absence of burden. He observes that we are often compelled towards weight, towards the heaviest of burdens.[12] Both Jules and Mather's brother desire the weight of which Kundera speaks, and in both cases, this burden is represented by the power of a higher authority, a power to which each longs to submit. The characters of Kundera's novel prefer to live in the oppressive conditions of Czechoslovakia after the Prague Spring because their lives are made more "real and truthful" beneath the weight of such oppression; life becomes more precious with greater burdens. Jules's longings and the suicide of Mather's brother attest to the intensity of the human need for heaviness. Greene illustrates that organizations which demand obedience can sometimes be strangely compelling; they can give a certain meaning to otherwise meaningless lives.

Such organizations also attract those who wish to partake in the power provided by a unified group. Within a group, exploitive or coercive power can often be exercised with impunity, so that the group can afford a normally weak individual a unique opportunity to exercise power. Greene explores this phenomenon in A Gun For Sale in

the episode of the student "rag" which, by definition, is meant as a display of power against authority. It is also within the context of the rag that Greene is able to examine power's effect upon the criminal impulse. The rag takes place during an air-raid practice in Nottwich. Officially, the participating medical students are enlisted to practise helping casualties. Instead they plan to search the town for anyone disobeying civic defence instructions by not wearing a gas-mask during the drill. Those in violation will be punished. What follows is not only an ingenious plot device, it is one of Greene's most significant comments on the nature of power.

For Buddy Fergusson the rag is an opportunity to exercise a kind of power usually denied him. "Buddy was having a hell of a time. Everyone was scampering to obey his orders. He was the leader. They'd duck or pelt anyone he told them to. He had an enormous sense of power; it more than atoned for unsatisfactory examination results, for surgeons' sarcasms" (140). For Buddy, power and violence are inextricable; leadership is desirable only in that it affords one the opportunity to direct violence against anybody and in any manner one chooses. Buddy's awareness of his own mediocrity results in a love of power and a willingness to engage in random street violence. Not surprisingly, the only examination Buddy has passed is in the Officer's Training Corps. Although his training may have prepared him for commanding a company in the trenches, as he believes, Buddy's disposition is more suited for leading Hitler's Brown Shirts through the streets. Greene again shows that the thirst for power will always be greatest in the parched man, in he who has seldom tasted its pleasures, and who has instead tasted the bitter draught of failure.

With his portrait of Buddy, Greene shows for the first time how issues of sexuality and power are related: "Buddy felt strong, coarse, vital, a town-bull; he hardly remembered himself that he was a virgin, guilty only of a shame-faced unsuccessful attempt on the old Nottwich tart; he was sustained by his imagination into every bed" (141). Sexual inexperience accounts for a greater need to prove one's self, to assume the persona of a town bull or bully. Greene elsewhere equates virginity with a potential for evil. In Brighton Rock, Pinkie experiences the same painful knowledge of his own innocence, and like Buddy, resorts to criminal violence to establish his sense of manhood. Likewise, Alden Pyle sublimates his sexual impulse through terrorist activity. In short, Greene suggests that inexperience and ignorance can result in a violent display of power.

Ultimately, Buddy uses his leadership of a group to take revenge upon Watt, a fellow student whose intelligence and aristocratic lineage offends Buddy. When the group breaks into Watt's flat to "debag" him, Watt suggests that their desire to do so is motivated by sexual jealousy. Buddy responds by destroying one of Watt's books with ink, and ordering his group to destroy the contents of Watt's room. This final display of power is a mild anticipation of the frenzy of Krystallnaht, in which the formerly powerless Nazi thugs use their group membership as a means to exact revenge. In this allegorical sense, the image of Nazism is also suggested by the very mission that Buddy and his gang have undertaken. After all, by insisting that every citizen wear his or her gas-mask, the members of the gang become self-appointed enforcers of state-sponsored conformity. Every citizen becomes faceless, so that the gas-mask becomes a symbol for the dehumanizing effect of uniforms and the totalitarianism they represent to Greene.[13]

Those without gas-masks fall beyond state-approval. Where the identity of every individual has eroded, the outcast or outlaw, that person who insists on asserting his own identity, his individualism, becomes uncomfortably visible, and is subject to greater persecution. When Raven steals Buddy's gas-mask and clothing in order to enter the offices of Midland Steel, Sir Marcus's enclave, we witness the triumph of the outcast as he appropriates the state's instruments of power. We witness the triumph of the victim over the bully (one of Greene's favourite devices). The enforcer of the state policy of conformity is literally stripped of his power, and humiliated by a man whose disfigurement has never allowed him to conform in the first place. Thus, Raven uses the conformity demanded by the state to destroy one of its corrupt members; the petty criminal murders the man who would commit crimes against humanity. Ironically, in so doing, Raven, the outlaw, saves the society from which he has always been excluded.

3

POWER AND INNOCENCE IN THE QUIET AMERICAN

With the publication of The Quiet American, Greene began a creative period dominated by a concern with state institutions, international politics and contemporary political conflicts. The Quiet American, Our Man in Havana, The Comedians, The Honorary Consul, and The Human Factor are among the works of this period. These novels constitute the fulfilment of Greene's artistic pledge to remain "a piece of grit in the machinery of the state."[1] They are distinguished by the intensity of Greene's political vision, as well as by his willingness to attack certain members of the ruling elite and the operatives of state power. In The Quiet American, Greene criticizes American imperialism; in Our Man In Havana and The Human Factor, the intelligence community is, in the first instance, a subject of ridicule, and in the second, of scorn; in The Honorary Consul, Greene extends his sympathy to the Paraguayan rebels rather than to General Stroessner; The Comedians is a direct attack on the Haitian dictatorship of Papa Doc Duvalier. Indeed, Greene so effectively criticizes that regime that Duvalier's propagandists subsequently published a pamphlet decrying the novel as the creation of a "thoroughly perverted and unbalanced ego."[2] His perversions notwithstanding, Greene, in each of these works, conveys his disdain for the abuses of power, and the inhumanity of the powerful.

As in earlier novels, Greene is pre-eminently concerned with the struggle of the individual against totality, just as he is intent upon illustrating the ways in which personal

dilemmas inspire political action, the ways in which individuals become *engagé*. Such involvement is intimately related to the human factor, an entity which plays a crucial role in nearly every novel after and including The Quiet American. The human factor, as I defined it in the introduction, is that element of the human spirit which counteracts the hegemonic machine and impedes the progress of totality. It is, to re-iterate, love versus power, charity versus greed, and loyalty to an individual rather than to an institution or ideology. In the case of The Quiet American, the human factor is, most importantly, experience versus innocence. Therefore, in this chapter, I will explore the interrelationships of power, innocence and the human factor, focusing upon the character of Alden Pyle, Greene's most dangerously innocent operative of totality.

In The Quiet American, the totality counteracted by the human factor is clearly the United States government. In the 1950's Greene's fiction began to reflect his publicly proclaimed hostility towards American intervention in Third World politics.[3] In almost every novel after The Quiet American, Greene is critical of American foreign policy and its disastrous effects throughout the world. He has remarked, "The temptation to double allegiance tends to disappear before American capitalism and imperialism. I would go to almost any length to put my feeble twig in the spokes of American policy."[4] Indeed, The Quiet American is the strongest, or at least the best aimed of Greene's feeble twigs. Yet the novel is more than mere propaganda. In Greene's view, American intervention seeks to destroy or subvert individual will and the sovereignty of foreign nations; it seeks conformity to a totality which is designed to fulfil the political and economic ambitions of the superpower while maintaining the facade of good will towards nations of a lesser

status. Therefore, the malevolence of self-interested intervention is disguised as benevolent assistance in the fight against the Communism of the Soviet Union or China, two other expansionist powers. Ultimately, the United States culturally and politically epitomizes materialist values diametrically opposed to the spiritual values Greene expounds. Thus, Greene merely uses the American government to represent that which he has always opposed: a totality which seeks to exploit the weak and extinguish individual rights. Perhaps Thomas Fowler, the jaded British journalist in Vietnam, expresses this concern best. He speaks of the hypocrisy of Western powers, of the politicians and diplomats who contend they are defending the individual even as they efface his identity:

> [Forty years ago,] who cared about the individuality of the man in the paddy field-- and who does now? The only man to treat him as a man is the political commissar. He'll sit in his hut and ask his name and listen to his complaints; he'll give up an hour a day teaching him--it doesn't matter what, he's being treated like a man, like someone of value. Don't go to the East with that parrot cry about a threat to the individual soul. Here you'd find yourself on the wrong side--it's they who stand for the individual and we just stand for Private 23987, unit in the global strategy. (97)

Fowler praises small local government, power with a human face, as opposed to the cold, political machinations of superpowers that only value the individual as a soldier in the defense of dogma. In fact, Fowler's sentiments reflect Greene's own belief that by "reducing a system of government to its smallest possible entity," we promote the human touch.[5] Thus, The Quiet American addresses issues of power and human rights which extend beyond contemporary political dilemmas; through its exploration of opposing

values, those to which I have referred generally as elements of the human factor, and those to which I refer as totality, The Quiet American transcends the historical moment it depicts.

Alden Pyle is the novel's agent of totality. A young man employed by the American Economic Aid Mission, Pyle arrives in Vietnam spouting Capitalist ideology and convinced of the existence of a Third Force, a group of disenfranchised Vietnamese committed neither to the apparent Communism of Ho Chi Mihn nor to the preservation of the colonial ties with France. General The and his band of thugs emerge as that Third Force. Subsequently, Pyle supplies the General with explosives with which to commit acts of terrorism, blinded to the barbarity of such acts by his devotion to ideology. Fowler recognizes the true nature of Pyle's mission, and, confronted by the immorality of murdering innocent civilians in the name of a cause, he indirectly participates in Pyle's assassination. The issue is further complicated by Pyle's affair with Phuong, Fowler's Vietnamese mistress, an affair which ultimately precipitates Fowler's political involvement. However questionable Fowler's motives, he does maintain an allegiance to human ties which counteracts Pyle's loyalty to country, flag, and ideology. Fowler and Pyle represent the dichotomy of human and state values, one which is presented in terms of innocence and experience.

The idea of destructive innocence and its affiliation with power is central to The Quiet American and is a peripheral concern of several of the novels which follow it. In The Quiet American such innocence is inextricable from Greene's conception of the quintessential American, just as in Our Man in Havana and The Human Factor it is a

principal characteristic of those who populate the intelligence community. In each case one observes that destructive innocence is the hallmark of intrusive power blocs and their operatives, men like Alden Pyle and Henry Hawthorne (Our Man in Havana) who enthusiastically meddle in political affairs about which they are woefully ill-informed. Likewise, in The Comedians, the meddling Smiths' stubbornly maintained belief in the ultimate goodness of human nature prevents them from immediately recognizing the evil nature of Duvalier's regime in Haiti. Such lack of insight, such innocence, in obscuring proper political commitment, can be just as dangerous as the innocence shared by Pyle and Hawthorne.

Greene's idea of destructive innocence is comparable to Rollo May's concept of pseudoinnocence. According to May, pseudoinnocence relies on naivete:

> It consists of a childhood that is never outgrown, a kind of fixation on the past. It is childishness rather than childlikeness. When we face questions too big and too horrendous to contemplate, such as the dropping of the atomic bomb, we tend to shrink into this kind of innocence and make a virtue of powerlessness, weakness, and helplessness. This pseudoinnocence leads to Utopianism; we do not see the real dangers. With unconscious purpose we close our eyes to reality and persuade ourselves that we have escaped it. This kind of innocence does not make things bright and clear . . . it makes them simple and easy. It wilts before our complicity with evil. It is innocence that cannot come to terms with the destructiveness of one's self and others; and hence . . . it actually becomes self-destructive. Innocence that cannot include the daimonic becomes evil.[6]

May's distinction between childlike and childish is apposite to our discussion of Greene. In Our Man in Havana, Wormold's teen-aged daughter, Milly, retains a childlike innocence, while Hawthorne is characterized as childish: "It seemed to Wormold that all

[Milly] said had a quality of sense; it was Hawthorne who belonged to the cruel and inexplicable world of childhood" (44). Indeed, Wormold "was glad that she could still accept fairy stories: a virgin who bore a child, pictures that wept or spoke words of love in the dark. Hawthorne and his kind were equally credulous, but they swallowed nightmares, grotesque stories out of science fiction" (72). In fact, those of Greene's characters distinguished by a wanton disregard for human life, by an absence of any humane moral code, and by an incapacity to love in a healthy manner can also be distinguished by their childishness. They are usually but not exclusively affiliated with the forces of totality; Pinkie and Raven are exceptions, for although they epitomize childish, destructive innocence, they are not instruments of power blocs. However, in The Quiet American, and later in Our Man in Havana and The Human Factor, we are confronted with the disturbing prospect that pseudoinnocence, or childishness, plays in the corridors of power, that many of those determining the fate of the world are nothing more than children playing games. Alden Pyle is one such child, and his explosives trade is appropriately referred to by Fowler as a "toy industry" (178).

According to May, pseudoinnocence opposes that element of the human factor to which I have referred as a knowledge of the world encompassing evil rather than denying it. May feels that pseudoinnocence is therefore particularly relevant to the puritan culture of the United States. This culture posits itself as the Garden of Eden before the serpent's arrival and therefore cannot come to terms with evil. Consequently, the United States, as a nation, "has failed to develop a viable sense of tragedy" that would allow empathy for its enemies, and mitigate its cruelty. In lacking a sense of complicity with evil, "most

Americans also lack the element of mercy, which may well turn out to be a *sine qua non* of living in this world with an attitude of humanity."[7] Fowler makes the same point when he remarks to Pyle, "I wish sometimes you had a few bad motives, you might understand a little more about human beings. And that applies to your country too, Pyle" (133). May further suggests that the fear of exploitative power is so profound in the American psyche that Americans have sought to deny their desire for power; instead they claim that their capacity "for moral thinking and for serving their fellow man" obviates "their need for power."[8] In other words, pseudoinnocence allows Americans to seek power under the pretext that they are merely attempting to improve the general good.

Of course, Alden Pyle epitomizes such pseudoinnocence, and from the outset Fowler describes Pyle in terms of innocence. The Quiet American opens with Fowler identifying Pyle's body at the morgue while identifying for the reader the principal aspects of Pyle's character, and by implication, those of the American character he represents: "I saw him in a family snapshot album, riding on a dude ranch, bathing in Long Island, photographed with his colleagues in some apartment on the twenty-third floor. He belonged to the skyscraper, and the express elevator, the ice-cream and the dry Martinis, milk at lunch, sandwiches on the Merchant Limited" (20). Greene economically, albeit heavy-handedly, paints a portrait of a youthful bourgeois indolence easily susceptible to the suggestion of a "Grand Tour" in Indo-China. Implicit in this portrait is Pyle's innocence, born of a pampered, isolated life in Xanadu. This innocence is plainly evident in Fowler's description of his first meeting with Pyle:

> I had seen him last September coming across the square towards the bar

> of the Continental: an unmistakably young and unused face flung at us like a dart. With his gangly legs and his crew-cut and his wide campus gaze he seemed incapable of harm. The tables on the street were most of them full. "Do you mind?" he asked with serious courtesy. "My name's Pyle. I'm new here," and he had folded himself around a chair and ordered a beer. Then he looked quickly up into the hard noon glare.
>
> "Was that a grenade?" he asked with excitement and hope.
>
> "Most likely the exhaust of a car," I said, and was suddenly sorry for his disappointment. One forgets so quickly one's own youth: once I was interested myself in what for want of a better term they call news. But grenades had staled on me; they were something listed on the back page of the local paper--so many last night in Saigon, so many in Cholon: they never made the European Press. Up the street came the lovely flat figures--the white silk trousers, the long tight jackets in pink and mauve patterns slit up to the thigh. I watched them with the nostalgia I knew I would feel when I had left these regions for ever. "They are lovely, aren't they?" I said over my beer, and Pyle cast them a cursory glance as they went up the Rue Catinat.
>
> "Oh, sure," he said indifferently: he was a serious type. "The Minister's very concerned with these grenades. It would be very awkward, he says, if there was an incident--with one of us, I mean."
>
> "With one of you? Yes, I suppose that would be serious. Congress wouldn't like it." Why does one tease the innocent. Perhaps only ten days ago he had been walking back across the Common in Boston, his arms full of the books he had been reading in advance on the Far East and the problems of China. He didn't even hear what I said: he was absorbed already in the dilemmas of Democracy and the responsibilities of the West; he was determined--I learnt that very soon--to do good, not to any individual person but a country, a continent, a world. Well, he was in his element now with the whole universe to improve. (17-8)

This passage illustrates Greene's views on the nature of power and innocence. The description of Pyle's face suggests the threat that innocence represents, and elsewhere Greene describes the representatives of repressive hegemony in precisely the same manner. For instance, in The Human Factor, Cornelius Muller, the head of the South African intelligence service, possesses a face very like Pyle's, "an indoors face, as smooth and pale as a bank clerk's or a junior servant's, a face unmarked by the torments of any

belief, human or religious, a face ready to receive orders and obey them promptly without question, a conformist face" (96). The conformity of Pyle and Muller lead them both to commit murder on behalf of the governments they represent.

Fowler's first impression of Pyle conveys two important points about the nature of Pyle's innocence. First, Fowler implies that this innocence is associated with Cold War rhetoric, specifically with American political ideology which disguises the quest for global supremacy as benevolence in exactly the manner Rollo May describes. As Fowler wryly hints, such innocence negates the value of the individual since it seeks to defend an ideology rather than "any individual person." Thus, Pyle's innocent desire to save the universe is paradoxically a destructive impulse. The explosives he supplies General The are used in a bombing attack on innocent civilians, the genuinely innocent who have, as Pyle insists, "died for democracy" (179). We see then that Pyle is immediately disassociated from one of the principal constituents of the human factor: loyalty to or concern for another person. This disassociation is illustrated by Pyle's indifference to actual people, to Fowler, for instance, of whom he remains oblivious throughout their first meeting, and to the women of the Rue Catinat.

In fact, this indifference constitutes the second important point. Pyle's innocence is characterized by an enthusiasm for exploding grenades and a complete indifference towards the beautiful women who populate the boulevard, by a capacity for violence rather than for sex or love. This trait is common among Greene's dangerous innocents. One recalls Buddy Fergusson in A Gun for Sale or Carter, Wormold's nemesis in Our Man in Havana, who "couldn't undo a girl's corset" and "was scared of women" (204).

Pinkie, another of Greene's innocents, prefers "cops and robbers" to Rose. In each of these cases an aversion to or fear of sex is related to blood-lust. The connection between virginity and destructive innocence is an important one. The point is best addressed by Fowler when he discusses with Pyle the latter's lack of sexual experience. "You can have a hundred women and still be a virgin," Fowler remarks, "Most of your G.I.s who were hanged for rape in the war were virgins. We don't have so many in Europe. I'm glad. They do a lot of harm" (104). Beyond suggesting that innocence is manifested in violence, Fowler observes a difference between European and American sensibilities; he suggests that American violence results from the inexperience of a country struggling through adolescence. This difference is highlighted by the comparison of Fowler's deepest sexual experience, "Lying in bed early one morning and watching a woman in a red dressing-gown brush her hair," with that of one of Pyle's American friends, Joe, who claims to have been "in bed with a Chink and a negress at the same time" (103). Fowler, the old-world representative, cherishes a moment of intimacy, of contact with a woman with whom he has made love; the sexual aspect of the encounter is less important than maintaining a human tie. For Joe, sex is selfish gratification, and later the subject of stories told in the company of other men to prove one's sexual prowess; it is a means to display masculine power. That Joe's encounter lacks any genuine human contact is illustrated by Pyle's use of racial slurs to describe the women. Although Joe is fifty years old, Fowler remarks that Joe's story is one befitting a man of twenty, an observation which shows again Fowler's belief in the innocent, adolescent nature of the American psyche.

The sexual aspect of Pyle's innocence reflects its more obvious, and more dangerous political dimension. Greene suggests a parallel between Pyle's relationship with Phuong, and his involvement with Vietnamese politics, both of which are based on theory rather than on a genuine concern for humanity, on innocence instead of experience. In both the political and sexual realm, Pyle's innocence is self-destructive. From the beginning, Fowler claims that Pyle died of his own political innocence:

> They killed him because he was too innocent to live. He was young and ignorant and silly and he got involved. He had no more notion than any of you what the whole affair is about, and you gave him money and York Harding's books on the East and said, "Win the East for democracy." He never saw anything he hadn't heard in a lecture-hall, and his writers and lecturers made a fool of him. When he saw a dead body he couldn't even see the wounds. A red menace, a soldier of Democracy.

When a victim's political allegiance supplants a concern for human suffering, and individuals become nothing more than the friends and enemies of a given ideology, the ideologue jeopardizes his own life. Similarly, like a "dead body," Phuong is transformed by Pyle from a human being into a symbol. His claim that he wants only to protect Phuong whom he calls a child might equally apply to Vietnam, and in both cases protection is equivalent to control (132-3). Moreover, Pyle remarks, "I want to give her a decent life. This place--smells" (133). He cannot completely disguise the ethnocentricity upon which his political and sexual aspirations are founded; he arrogantly assumes the task of improving both Phuong and the country she represents. This improvement consists in instilling the American House-wife's values in Phuong and American industry in Vietnam, or at least in replacing the smell of oxen with that of

industrial fumes. Pyle's "love" for Phuong is simply a naive political gesture in his continuing quest to expand American influence and to improve the universe. In his desire to take Phuong to the United States, and to claim Vietnam for America, Pyle reveals his allegiance to totality rather than to diversity. In any case, the final conflation of sexual and political innocence is achieved in Pyle's death. After all, his murder is the result of his disruptive intrusions into the lives of Fowler and Phuong and the politics of Vietnam, intrusions founded upon innocent perceptions of the world. Jealousy aroused by the loss of Phuong, and moral outrage in the face of Pyle's terrorist activity conspire to force Fowler's political involvement and his participation in Pyle's assassination.

Indeed, one of the novel's principal observations is that the politics of love, or at the very least, sex, parallels, counteracts and participates in larger political movements and events, that human connections must ultimately precipitate political commitment. As Fowler's friend, Captain Trouin, insists, "We all get involved in a moment of emotion and then we cannot get out. War and love--they have always been compared" (152). In fact, Fowler himself makes such a comparison earlier in remembering battles he and his wife had fought, and Green's familiar belief in the idea of life as a battlefield re-emerges:

> "In a way I was glad my wife had struck out at me again--I had forgotten her pain for too long, and this was the only recompense I could give her. Unfortunately the innocent are always involved in any conflict. Always, everywhere, there is some voice crying from a tower . . . . How much you pride yourself on being *degagé*, the reporter, not the leader-writer, and what a mess you make behind the scenes. The other kind of war is more innocent than this. One does less damage with a mortar" (119).

Fowler recognizes that the reporter's detachment is a myth, and that in politics, as in love,

involvement is unavoidable. Pyle innocently blunders into both wars but it is the war of love which costs him his life. Innocence proves most vulnerable in this war perhaps because love inflicts its wounds not on the body but on the soul. It is these wounds which finally precipitate Fowler's entrance into "the other war." He learns that "One has to take sides. If one is to remain human" (174). Ironically, the human factor, loyalty to another individual, a need for companionship, forces Fowler's involvement in Pyle's murder. This irony is evident in Fowler's final expression of guilt for having contributed to a man's death in the defense of his own life with Phuong: "Everything had gone right with me since he had died, but how I wished there existed someone to whom I could say that I was sorry" (189). However personal Fowler's reasons for murder, Greene indicates that such reasons are more valid than those for which Pyle has committed the same crime: Greene always accords the experienced humanist admiration and the innocent ideologue disdain.

Ultimately, Greene proved remarkable prescient in his portrayal of Alden Pyle. Greene's innocent American was followed to Vietnam by many more, and like their fictional predecessor, they demonstrated an allegiance to hegemonic ideology rather than to humanity or individualism. It was, after all, American soldiers who were heard to say, "We had to destroy the village in order to save it."

4

POWER AND KNOWLEDGE IN OUR MAN IN HAVANA & THE HUMAN FACTOR

Although published twenty years apart, Our Man in Havana and The Human Factor are companion works in which similar themes are expressed in contrasting forms and styles. While the first burlesques the British Secret Service, the other treats it more seriously. The Human Factor's sparse comedic moments are principally of the black variety, and although Our Man in Havana is a work of comedy, it contains some rather dark undertones. Whatever their differences in tone, these novels share the common Greeneian themes pertaining to power and politics: the struggle for power between the individual and the state, the virtue of disloyalty, and the effect of the human factor upon hegemony. Furthermore, in each novel Greene establishes a dichotomy between the wars waged by the powerful and the peace pursued by the Common Man, a dichotomy which is posited in terms of nightmare and dream. In fact, Greene's treatment of power here is intimately related to his characters' creation and acceptance of fantasy and fiction; there is, in these novels, an abiding concern with the nature of truth and its relationship to power.

Indeed, Greene uses the intelligence community as a means to explore the relationship between power and knowledge, and to confirm Bacon's maxim that "knowledge is power." The "spy novel" affords Greene an excellent opportunity to examine this relationship. After all, the explicit purpose of state-sponsored intelligence organizations is the collection of knowledge with which the state can preserve or extend

its power while diminishing that of enemies both within and without its borders. In these novels, Greene demonstrates that the gathering of "truth," and thus the expansion of power, can be impeded by the production and dissemination of alternate "truths." Within this context, truth should not be defined as an otherworldly entity subject to discovery, as "the reward of free spirits, the child of protracted solitude, nor the privilege of those who have succeeded in liberating themselves."[1] On the contrary, it is a product of power, and power cannot be exercised except through the production of truth. Or, to put it another way, truth "is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it."[2] This relationship is evident in Our Man in Havana and The Human Factor in which Greene demonstrates that hegemony becomes vulnerable precisely at the point where knowledge or truth is collected. In these novels, totality's production of knowledge and the subsequent expansion of its power is counteracted by agents operating within its own domain, but with subversive agendas. In depicting the operations of the SIS, Greene contrasts an organization that has lost its moral compass with individuals who cling stubbornly to their personal values and consequently betray the agencies they serve. He thus re-affirms his belief in the virtue of disloyalty, particularly in The Human Factor where Greene's notorious obsession with "divided loyalties" becomes the novel's guiding principle. The "human factor" is the dominant precept of both novels, for each explores the ways in which love interferes with the state's production of truth, and thus, with its power, offering love as an alternative to totality.

Greene conducts his exploration of truth and power by focusing on falsehood since

he is essentially concerned here with fantasy and invention, with secret identities and elaborate role-playing. Jim Wormold is a counterfeit spy and Maurice Castle is a double agent; their secret identities and their subsequent control of knowledge or truth constitute a seizure of state-power. Moreover, in both works Greene compares the fairy-tales and fantasies of his subversive agents with the nightmares of the intelligence community. Such a comparison is also made in The Ministry of Fear where Arthur Rowe dreams of telling his dead mother about the strange world of 1942:

> 'This isn't real life anymore . ... Tea on the lawn, evensong, croquet, the old ladies calling, the gentle unmalicious gossip, the gardener trundling the wheelbarrow full of leaves and grass. People write about it as if it still went on; lady novelists describe it over and over again in books of the month, but it's not there any more . . . . The Germans are smashing London to bits all round me . . . . It sounds like a thriller, doesn't it, but the thrillers are like life--more like life than you are, this lawn, your sandwiches, that pine. You used to laugh at the books Miss Savage read--about spies, and murders, and violence, and wild motor-chases, but dear, that's real life: it's what we made of the world since you died. I'm your little Arthur who wouldn't hurt a beetle and I'm a murderer too. The world has been remade by William Le Queux.' (65)

Wormold and Castle seek the life with which Mrs. Rowe was familiar, a life of tranquil happiness quite apart from the world of "spies, and murders, and violence," in which they find themselves. It is the age of innocence to which they long to return. For Greene, this age is epitomized by rural England prior to World War I, the time of his early childhood, which he has called a "state of happiness" and "extremely peaceful."[3] Castle, who shares many of his creator's views, articulates Greene's view of childhood, and, like Greene, regards Berkhamsted Common as an emblem of a quieter, innocent time. In both novels, as in this passage from The Ministry of Fear, Greene explores the nature of reality in this

context of war and peace; he asks whether the wars and the political games, covert and otherwise, are any more *real*, or more valid, than the common man's pursuit of peace at the periphery of power. Thus, the fantasies and dreams of Wormold and Castle are ones of personal tranquillity and are intended to insulate them from violent activities of the agencies for which they work. The "political horror" to which Greene has sometimes referred, and the need for escape from it, is central to these works. The desire to escape from politics to peace, from the excesses of power into the comfort of domestic life, provides the impetus for the political betrayals of Wormold and Castle.

The setting of Our Man in Havana is Batista's Havana on the eve of Castro's revolution, a country to which Greene refers in terms of fantasy and reality, war and peace:

> I enjoyed the *louche* atmosphere of Batista's city and I never stayed long enough to be aware of the sad political background of arbitrary imprisonment and torture . . . . it struck me that here in this extraordinary city, where every vice was permissible and every trade possible, lay the true background of my comedy . . . . Strangely enough, as I planned my fantastic comedy, I learned for the first time of the realities of Batista's Cuba.[4]

Through this shadowy city in which some pursue their fantasies and others endure their most feared political horrors, limps Jim Wormold. Wormold is a vacuum-cleaner salesman who reluctantly joins the British secret service in order to augment his income and meet the expenses of his extravagant daughter Milly. He is the typical Greeneian anti-hero, a middle-aged British exile, lonely, weak, and living in the ruins of a failed marriage. Even his name suggests weakness and insignificance. Like the earliest of

Greene's protagonists--Conrad Drover, D., Arthur Rowe--Wormold is a passive, powerless man whose childhood is the ultimate source of his weakness, a time when he suffered "the inefficient tortures of a school dormitory" (31). Wormold thinks, "Schools were said to construct character by chipping off the edges. His edges had been chipped, but the results had not, he thought, been character--only shapelessness, like an exhibit in the Museum of Modern Art" (31). Indeed, Wormold's indeterminate character and passivity adversely affects his marriage. "No wonder May had left him. He remembered one of their quarrels. 'Why don't you do something, act some way, any way at all? You just stand there . . .'" (29). Wormold cannot even bring himself to oppose Milly's extravagance: He "became a coward when he watched her; he hated to oppose her in anything" (18). Ultimately, he is bullied by Henry Hawthorne into joining the Secret Service simply because "In a mad world it always seems simpler to obey" (27). Like the heroes that have preceded him, Wormold will strengthen his personal power through political action.

Wormold's only friend in Havana is Dr. Hasselbacher, an old German doctor with whom Wormold drinks his morning daiquiri. The novel opens with an amusing and significant conversation between Wormold and Hasselbacher in which they weigh the merits of the Atomic Pile vacuum cleaner with the dangers of an atomic war. Wormold worries that the name of his newest cleaner will deter sales. After all, in Havana, "where the clergy are preaching all the time against the misuse of science," an atomic cleaner may not be popular among those who fear both its radio-activity and the wrath of God. Furthermore, diminished sales may interfere with Wormold's "long-term" plan of

providing for his daughter's future (9). The doctor tells Wormold that long-term goals are foolish, for "we live in an atomic age . . . . Push a button--piff bang--where are we?" (10). Thus, their discussion comically contrasts the absurd and trivial effects of the atomic age, its commercial effects with the more disturbing possibility of global destruction; the false advertising of Phastkleaners, who use the word "atomic" to increase their share of the market, is compared to the very real danger of an age in which superpowers use the threat of nuclear destruction to achieve global supremacy. There is a dichotomy established between the "uncomfortable truths" of the common man's life and those inflicted upon all of humanity by science and power.

For Hasselbacher, both the trivial and the important effects of the ascendancy of science, and the use of science by agencies of power can be countered only by turning one's back and pursuing an alternative science, by dreaming. He tells Wormold,

> You are interested in a person, not in life, and people die or leave us . . . . But if you are interested in life it never lets you down. I am interested in the blueness of cheese. You don't do crosswords, do you, Mr. Wormold? I do, and they are like people: one reaches an end. I can finish any crossword within an hour, but I have a discovery concerned with the blueness of cheese that will never come to a conclusion--although of course one dreams that perhaps a time might come . . . One day I must show you my laboratory . . . . You should dream more, Mr. Wormold. Reality in our century is not something to be faced. (10)

Since human relationships are inherently fragile and the complexities of every individual can be resolved as simply as a crossword puzzle is finished, Hasselbacher concludes that a reclusive life is best. Ironically, in recoiling from humanity and its potential for self-destruction, Hasselbacher finds solace in science. Indeed, his amateur experiments

provide a counterpoint to those of the state, in that they have nothing to do with splitting atoms and jeopardizing the world, but extend merely as far as the blue-cheese research he conducts for personal pleasure. The state employs science to construct weapons of war, while Hasselbacher uses it as a means to attain personal peace. Thus, in humanity's nightmarish potential for self-destruction, and Hasselbacher's hopeless dream of peace, Greene posits two disparate views of science, one associated with power, the other with helplessness.

Hasselbacher's helplessness arises from his inability to find lasting peace as we discover when his fragile and carefully constructed peace is finally shattered forever. Ironically, in one last attempt to recapture the tranquillity of his youth, the doctor dons the cavalry uniform he wore prior to World War I, before he was forced to kill a man. "It was all so peaceful . . . in those days," he remarks (139). Appropriately, Hasselbacher's memory of peace is disturbed by a recollection of an encounter with the Kaiser who said to Hasselbacher, "I remember you. You are Captain Muller." The Common Man's alienation from power is illustrated by the Kaiser's inability to remember his soldiers' names. Ultimately, the doctor admits that his friendship with Wormold, his last remaining human contact, precipitated the destruction of his laboratory, his subsequent recruitment by the agencies aligned against Wormold, and the end of his peace. Of course, Greene has consistently denigrated the hermitic impulse and demonstrated its folly in a world that demands, in fact, forces political involvement. The doctor is yet another of Greene's *degagé* characters drawn helplessly into politics because he has maintained human contact, however limited.

Nonetheless, Hasselbacher's praise of dreams provides Wormold with a course of action once he is enlisted by Hawthorne and the secret service. Confronted with the absurd reality of the covert struggle for power among the world's strongest states, Wormold simply dreams, or, more accurately, he creates an alternative reality. As he is about to embark on his career in espionage, Wormold receives a warning from Dr. Hasselbacher:

> 'Be careful, Mr. Wormold. Take their money, but don't give them anything in return. You are vulnerable to the Seguras. Just lie and keep your freedom. They don't deserve the truth.'
> 'Whom do you mean by they?'
> 'Kingdoms, republics, powers.' (58)

Hasselbacher's warning constitutes the novel's most salient philosophical observation, that in order to maintain freedom and power, the individual must subvert the most harmful agendas of power blocs through the production and control of truth. Hasselbacher implicitly suggests that Wormold's vulnerability lies in his having a daughter, in his maintaining a human relationship, and that if Wormold hopes to preserve the domestic tranquillity he has forged for himself and Milly, he must impede power's access to truth. To this end, Wormold pretends to recruit various reputable citizens of Havana as sub-agents, invents other, and begins sending false reports to his superiors in London, making a substantial profit in the meantime. However, like Hasselbacher, Wormold eventually discovers that the most repressive powers seek to disrupt the most meaningful relationships of its enemies.

Wormold's superiors are the source of some rich comedy just as Castle's fellow

agents provide The Human Factor with its darkest drama. In both novels, the members of the secret service share a common trait--innocence. The Chief in Our Man in Havana is said to have an "innocent eye" as he wistfully creates a portrait of Wormold, the "merchant-king," which is at once funny, pathetic, and woefully inaccurate:

> A man who has always learnt to count the pennies and risk the pounds. That's why he's not a member of the Country Club--nothing to do with a broken marriage. Women have come and gone in his life; I suspect they never meant as much to him as his work. The secret to successfully using an agent is to understand him. Our man in Havana belongs--you might say--to the Kipling age. Walking with kings--how does it go?--and keeping your virtue, crowds and the common touch. I expect somewhere in that ink-stained desk of his there's an old penny note-book of black wash-leather in which he kept his first accounts--a quarter gross of india--rubbers, six boxes of steel nibs . . . . Find it, Hawthorne, and he's yours for life. (48)

Where one expects to find a sagacious and discerning head of the SIS, we discover instead an impercipient dolt. The Chief claims to know the character of his newest agent, when in fact the "small shop for vacuum cleaners had been drowned beyond recovery in the tide of the Chief's literary imagination. Agent 59200/5 was established" (47). The Chief's portrait of Wormold as a type, whether as a hero of colonial fiction or as number 59200/5, is reminiscent of Alden Pyle's division of humanity into soldiers of democracy and red menaces. Such simplistic views are not only inaccurate, but dangerous, since they devalue the individual. That the Chief imagines Wormold supremely capable of conversing with power in the manner of a Kipling hero provides yet another irony since Wormold, the alienated enemy of power, is currently conversing with power in an entirely deceitful manner; this is hardly the virtue Kipling intended.

In a still more comic vein, the Chief's fertile imagination leads him to believe that Wormold's crude drawings of vacuum cleaner parts represent a new weapon of mass destruction. "It gave me a very nasty nightmare," the Chief confesses (78). "The ingenuity, the simplicity, the devilish imagination of the thing" (79). Again, as in the earlier discussion between Hasselbacher and Wormold, the atomic vacuum becomes a symbol employed to contrast the common man's peaceful and harmless vocation with fantasies of war prevalent among the powerful. Just as he had earlier sold the fiction of an atomic vacuum cleaner, Wormold now sells the idea of a weapon based on that vacuum's design. The Chief's lack of discernment and his alarming, albeit amusing, capacity to absorb Wormold's fiction into his very own spy novel accords with Greene's exploration of truth and power. The Chief's literary imagination will allow him to accept Wormold's fantastic reports as truth, therefore subjecting his personal power, and the power of his organization to risk. One recalls Wormold's distinction between Milly's innocent acceptance of "fairy stories" and the common spy's pseudoinnocent acceptance of "nightmares" and "grotesque stories out of science fiction" (72). We see that Wormold's fiction is compatible with the Chief's literary creations, and is therefore accepted as truth. In the inventions of Wormold and the Chief, truth is linked to power in a circular relation; each man produces his own truth in the hope of maintaining power. Power subsequently induces its own truth, for each man's insulated position in the intelligence hierarchy, one high, the other low, allows him to freely invent knowledge and thus induce power. That Wormold's fake stories begin to come true simply compounds the irony, and suggests that truth is only what one makes it.

The relationship of Maurice Castle and his superiors is similar to that of Wormold and the Chief. Castle works with his friend Davis in a small department of the SIS collecting intelligence from South Africa. Meanwhile, Castle's superiors are co-operating with agents from the United States and South Africa in support of an American military operation code-named Uncle Remus. The purpose of Uncle Remus is to supply the South African government with nuclear weapons should a full-scale war erupt between it and the Communist rebels. During the negotiation of this sensitive co-operation between South Africa and Britain, Castle's superiors discover a leak from his department to the Soviets, and assign Colonel Daintry to investigate. Suspicion immediately falls upon Castle and Davis. Sir Hargreaves, Dr. Percival and Colonel Daintry discount Castle as the double-agent because he does not fit the accepted profile of a traitor. According to Daintry, traitors are usually "brilliant and ambitious," but the "dullish" Castle is "safely married," pays his few creditors, and assiduously avoids "high living" (32).

Castle is in fact the double agent, but Daintry and his associates have failed to include the human factor in their calculations. Castle had previously worked under cover in South Africa with the assistance of Sarah and Carson, a Communist insurgent. When Castle's love affair with Sarah is discovered by the police, Castle is forced to flee without her, and Carson must smuggle Sarah out of the country. Castle thus feels himself indebted to Carson and his comrades. Consequently, he is motivated to commit treason not by avarice or ambition, but rather by love and loyalty, something of which Castle's fellow agents have no understanding. Their profile of the typical traitor is as literary as the Chief's assessment of Wormold, but has much more tragic repercussions: the hapless

and entirely innocent Davis loosely fits their standard profile of a double agent, and he is subsequently caught in the cross-hairs.

While the Chief in Our Man in Havana makes erroneous assumptions regarding his newest agent based upon an anachronistic and romantic world-view, the inaccurate assessments made by Castle's superiors are founded upon an inflexible policy to which they steadfastly adhere. That these men are in the business of collecting truth, and yet are unable to penetrate even the flimsiest of secrets is certainly the greatest source of irony in these novels. Greene seems to be suggesting that those whose actions have the greatest effect upon the world's fragile balance of power are in fact complete morons. Elsewhere, Greene contends that the powerful may appear as fools simply because their power does not allow for any reality beyond that which they themselves create. In other words, truth is produced by power. As Wormold is being interrogated by the police, he begins "to realize what the criminal class knows so well, the impossibility of explaining anything to a man with power" (66). The same observation is made in The Honorary Consul, where it is said that "The police were strong enough to speak the truth" (178). Greene's references to the police and the criminal suggest that the state creates truth with its instruments of power, and that the criminal or the outsider has no access to the truth if he does not possess the power to produce it.

As in The Quiet American, innocence is associated in The Human Factor with a certain childishness, as well as with an incapacity to enjoy, and thus comprehend, genuine or "real" human contact. Indeed, Castle's happy marriage sharply contrasts with the solitude of those with whom he works. Sir Hargreaves seems to have married his

American wife for status rather than for love. His friends, Dicky and Buffy, with their appropriately childish names, disapprove of marriage, and have a penchant for discussing candy--maltesers and smarties in particular. Colonel Daintry, who, among his associates, is the most human, admits to himself that the SIS killed his marriage "with their secrets" (212). Subsequently, he has no meaningful contact with the daughter he barely knows.

However, Dr. Percival is surely the most innocent, and indeed, the most dangerous of Castle's associates. He is characterized by his complete solitude. Daintry observes that "Nobody seemed to know Percival's first name" (27), and Percival confesses, "'Never married myself . . . To tell you the truth I never had much interest in women'" (37). Indeed, Percival takes much more interest in his work, particularly in his plan to murder Davis with aflatoxin. He remarks, "One side advantage of this, of course, is that we should gain valuable information on how aflatoxin works on a human being" (83). Percival has very little regard for people. He does, however, have an almost obsessive interest in fish, and consistently compares the suspected double-agent with a fish for which he is angling. These comparisons are at once chilling and darkly comical. When he attends Davis's funeral, he thinks to himself that the ceremony would be of more interest if the coffin contained a fish, "an enormous trout perhaps" (161). Contemplating whether he has killed the right man, he thinks, "It was a pity one couldn't throw a man back into the river of life as one could throw a fish" (161). And when Sir Hargreaves chastises him for the rashness of Davis's murder, he replies, "When you feel a fish on the line you don't stand waiting on the bank for someone else to advise you what to do" (163). Greene cleverly uses this obsession with fish to illustrate Percival's inhumanity,

and the manner in which Percival's cold abstractions have led him so far astray from any discernable moral code. This is nowhere more clear than in Percival's comparison of the intelligence agency to a Ben Nicholson lithograph of multi-coloured squares. He tells Daintry that each department of the agency is like one of these squares:

> There's your section 6. That's your square from now on. You don't need to worry about the blue and the red. All you have to do is pin-point our man and tell me. You've no responsibility for what happens in the blue or red squares. In fact not even the yellow. You just report. No bad conscience. No guilt. (38)

Percival convinces himself with these abstractions that one is not responsible for one's actions, that the structured insularity of the Secret Service obviates moral responsibility. Such a view is not so very different from that of Alden Pyle, another of Greene's dangerous innocents who justifies murder with abstractions.

Such abstractions are manifested in the childish gamesmanship of Dr. Percival and his kind. The Doctor remarks, "We are playing games . . . all of us. It's important not to take the game too seriously or we may lose it. We have to keep flexible, but it's important, naturally, to play the same game" (35). Likewise, in Our Man in Havana, the members of the intelligence community are said to participate in a "*Boys' Own Paper* game," and Hawthorne, the principal representative of the Secret Service, is characterized as a "simpleton" and an "adolescent" (109). In both novels, the children of power trivialize activities which have tragically fatal repercussions. The concept of the game usefully disguises the destructive aspects of their power, for the loss of an actual game may mean nothing more than the loss of a chess-piece or a hotel on Park Place. In the

real world, however, loss is measured in human terms and may be manifested in body counts, a fact of which Greene's innocent characters are so appallingly oblivious. Indeed, Greene has remarked that for members of the intelligence community, "the profession can become a sort of game as abstract as chess: the spy takes more interest in the mechanics of his calling than in its ultimate goal--the defence of his country. The 'game' (a serious game) achieves such a degree of sophistication that the player loses sight of his moral values."[5] Perhaps it is appropriate then that the resolution of Our Man in Havana is achieved by Wormold's triumph over Captain Segura in a game of draughts in which the checkers are replaced with miniature whisky bottles. Greene thus exposes the absurdity of the intelligence game, or any political game in which the effects of power are trivialized.

Ultimately, the loyalty of Castle and Wormold to loved ones places them in conflict with institutions for which they work, agencies in which personal loyalty is supplanted by childish gamesmanship, the hallmark of innocence. In contrast to this gamesmanship, Wormold and Castle are engaged in genuine relationships. Greene has rarely portrayed the love of two people as tenderly as he does that of Castle and Sarah, and in Our Man in Havana Wormold's relationships are distinguished by their warmth and sincerity. Indeed, "real" is the word most often applied to Wormold's relationships. Wormold himself characterizes Beatrice, a fellow agent and a kindred spirit with whom he falls in love, as "real" (93), and later she says to him, "I don't want you murdered. You see, you are real" (167). Interestingly, Beatrice indicates that power corrupts the real. She says of her ex-husband, "It takes two to keep something real. He was acting

all the time. He thought he was a great lover. Sometimes I almost wished he would turn impotent for a while just so that he'd lose his confidence. You can't love and be as confident as he was." Egotism, hypocrisy and an excessive concern with one's own power are the enemies of love. In contrast, Wormold finds peace in the comforting reality of his relationship with Milly.

> That evening hour was real, but not Hawthorne, mysterious and absurd, not the cruelties of police stations and governments, the scientists who tested the new H-bomb on Christmas Island, Khrushchev who wrote notes: these seemed less real to him than the inefficient tortures of the school dormitory. The small boy with the damp-towel who he had just remembered--where was he now? The cruel come and go like cities and thrones and powers, leaving their ruins behind them. They had no permanence. But the clown whom he had seen with Milly at the circus--that clown was permanent, for his act never changed. That was the way to live; the clown was unaffected by the vagaries of public men and the enormous discoveries of the great. (31-2)

Wormold distinguishes between the reality of his domestic affairs and the fantastic absurdities practised by the powerful, between the real love he shares with his daughter and the inhumanity of those who wage the Cold War. Moreover, the cruelties of state power are associated with those of childhood, yet a child's cruelty seems more real than those practised by the state. Childhood's tortures have become more sophisticated and are practised on such a grand scale that they have assumed a nightmarish quality that divorces them from reality. In the face of such a nightmare, Wormold longs to retreat into a clownish but peaceful innocence of the world's horrors. However, like Hasselbacher, he is drawn into the horror by his allegiance to another human being, to his daughter, to Beatrice, and finally to Dr. Hasselbacher himself. When Hasselbacher

is murdered, Wormold must abandon his disinterested clownish persona, and actively participate in the political world, whatever its horrors. Wormold's justification of the actions he must undertake is in fact a classic Greeneian defence of the necessity for commitment founded upon human relations.

> I would kill to show that you can't kill without being killed in your turn. I wouldn't kill for my country. I wouldn't kill for capitalism or Communism or social democracy or the welfare state--whose welfare? I would kill because Carter killed Hasselbacher. A family-feud had been a better reason to murder than patriotism or the preference for one economic system over another. If I love or if I hate, let me love or hate as an individual. I will not be 59200/5 in anyone's global war. (186)

Wormold contends that even murder retains some nobility if it is committed for reasons of individual loyalty, and that murder is a legitimate defense against the agents of totality.

When Wormold finally confronts Carter, he shoots at him but only succeeds in smashing Carter's pipe. Carter responds by calling Wormold a clown. "How right Carter was. [Wormold] put the gun down beside him and slipped into the driving seat. Suddenly he felt happy. He might have killed a man. He proved conclusively to himself that he wasn't one of the judges; he had no vocation for violence" (203). Wormold clings to the image of himself as a clown, "unaffected by the vagaries" of the powerful. In the moment of satisfaction, Carter fires his gun, Wormold fires back, and Carter is killed. The judge proves more real than the clown, for in a world of violent conflict, one in which political commitment is demanded, preserving one's clown-like persona proves both difficult and dangerous. The clown innocently closes his eyes; at least the judge participates in the world's conflicts, however inaccurate his judgements.

If the clown is emblematic of personal peace in Our Man in Havana, it is Berkhamsted Common which fulfils this role in The Human Factor. In one pivotal scene Castle and Sam stroll across Berkhamsted Common debating the existence of spies and fairies. Sam's queries regarding the existence of "real spies," and whether spies were once executed on the Common, sparks in Castle a memory of a discussion between his father and himself:

> Castle remembered how at the same age he had asked his father whether there were really fairies, and the answer had been less truthful than his own. His father had been a sentimental man; he wished to reassure his small son at any cost that living was worth while. It would have been unfair to accuse him of dishonesty: a fairy, he might have argued, was a symbol which represented something which was at least approximately true. There were still fathers around even today who told their children that God existed. (58-9)

The connection between fairies and God is significant. In Greene's lexicon, the two are nearly interchangeable, for each suggests faith, childlike spirituality, innocence and peace. One remembers that Milly believes in fairies as well as in the Virgin Mary. Castle compares the assuring presence of fairies or God with the threatening world of spies. The distinction between fairies and spies recalls the contrasting lives of Mrs. Rowe and her son, lives of idyllic peace and shocking violence. Like Rowe, Castle has been drawn into the world of spies. The fairy tale he tells Sam captures the moment, so often depicted by Greene, when a child's innocence is destroyed, and his peace is disrupted forever. Castle remembers his childhood friendship with a congenial dragon who inhabited the trenches of the Common, and who is hated and hunted by all the world. However, Sam has never heard of a dragon, and asks Castle if it resembles a tank. Castle admits that

a dragon is a little like a tank, and is discouraged by the "lack of contact between their two imaginations" (59). Greene is again concerned with variant modes of reality and their relationship to war and peace. Like Mrs. Rowe or Dr. Hasselbacher, Castle recalls the fragile peace that preceded the first world war, a peace which coincided with the tranquillity of his childhood. Even as he attempts to recall this moment of tranquillity, Castle is confronted with the modern child's familiarity with war and violence. Nonetheless, suffering the familiar torments of the dormitory, the young Castle feels a special bond with the persecuted dragon who acts as his protector (the classical role of dragons), and the two exchange "private signals, codes, ciphers." "Like a spy," replies Sam. "Yes," Castle reluctantly admits, "Like a spy" (60). Berkhamsted Common becomes the nexus between the worlds of fairies and spies, between childhood peace and the adult's strife, and so it is from the Common that Castle dispatches his reports to the Communists using as his book-code War and Peace. Ultimately, the disappearance of the dragon from the young Castle's life signals the child's emergence into the adult's war-torn world. In this world one cannot seek the protection of fairies or God, but must endure instead petty little men who commit violent crimes with impunity, who have elaborated upon the tortures of the dormitory and the games of childhood, to create a world where peace is a foolish dream and violence reigns supreme.

Castle's name suggests a fortification against the intrusions of power and its wars, against the disruption of his domestic peace, and we are surely meant to recall that a man's home is his castle. Yet this expression proves a lie when Castle's home is ultimately destroyed by the agencies of power. Cornelius Muller, Castle's arch enemy,

knows that betrayal is born of loyalty, and recognizes Castle as the double-agent. Castle is forced to flee to Moscow without Sarah. Since Sam is not on her passport, Sarah can never join Castle in Moscow. The telephone conversation between Castle and Sarah with which the novel concludes constitutes one of Greene's bleakest resolutions (a very substantial achievement considering the manner in which most of his novels conclude). The separated couple unconvincingly tell each other that things will work out as the line goes dead. The peace Castle has always sought is contrasted with the silence he must ultimately endure--the silence of the disconnected telephone line to Sarah, the thousand miles of silence that separates them, and the silence of the bureaucracies for which he is merely a pawn in a game. If the counteraction of totality is the most courageous act of individualism and the greatest source of human nobility, in Greene's world such nobility is bought for a terrible price.

CONCLUSION: POWER IN THE TWILIGHT

With Doctor Fischer of Geneva or The Bomb Party and Monsignor Quixote, Greene concludes his life-long exploration of power, portraying the last days of two very different old men. The purpose of the present chapter is not to provide a comprehensive analysis of these two novels, but rather to briefly illustrate that they recapitulate a philosophy of power which has dominated Greene's career. In these works Greene explores the confrontation between faith and power. He contrasts power and greed with love and charity, and material wealth with spiritual well-being. In both novels the merits of the "good life" are weighed against the worthless and ultimately illusory world of money and power. Indeed, the two elderly protagonists, Doctor Fischer and Monsignor Quixote are diametrically opposed characters who, as Maria Couto observes, represent "selfish absorption with worldly goods and power on the one hand and on the other, a life shorn of everything except humanity laced with the innocent joys of living--friendship, conversation, wine and cheese."[1] Moreover, within each novel, power is viewed as nothing more than a means to repress or destroy the "innocent joys" of which Couto speaks.

In fact, nowhere in Greene's canon is power's destructive capacity more evident, and the vulnerability of innocent joy better expressed than in Doctor Fischer. The doctor is the wealthy Swiss inventor of a toothpaste, Dentophil Bouquet, and is thus amusingly contrasted with the novel's narrator, Alfred Jones, a middle-aged translator in a large confections company, who falls in love with Fischer's young daughter, Anna-Luise.

Having long ago earned his fortune, the doctor now amuses himself by orchestrating dinner parties for a small group of sycophants. During each of these dinners, the "guests" endure certain degrading "games" in the hopes that their humiliations will be rewarded. The relationship between Fischer and his guests is one of "a huntsman controlling his pack with a crack of the whip" (59). Absolutely devoid of any warmth or sincerity, it is a relationship in which Fischer employs his power and wealth to wager greed against humiliation while his guests maintain an insipid facade of friendship and goodwill.

Jones and Anna-Luise, on the other hand, pursue a sincere relationship which offers a counterpoint not only to the doctor's pitiful exercises in control and humiliation, but also to Fischer's loveless marriage to Anna-Luise's mother, Anna. Dr. Fischer's failure to comprehend Anna's love of music results in her finding companionship with Steiner, a man who shares her interest in Mozart and Heifetz. When Fischer discovers his wife's apparent infidelity, he uses his influence to have Steiner discharged from his job as a clerk. Subsequently, his jealousy and hatred so infect his marriage, that Anna dies "like an African who can just will herself to die" (40). The doctor admits that infidelity might have been understandable had Steiner not been so insignificant, had he not been a mere clerk, "earning minimum wage," a man who, as Jones remarks, "wasn't rich enough to cuckold" the great Doctor Fischer.

Ultimately, Dr. Fischer's wife and daughter represent the "innocent joys" of life that he opposes and the humanity with which he has lost touch. It is significant that Anna's infidelity consists only in loving the music her husband is so incapable of appreciating, and in sharing that love with another man. Just as Herr Krogh of England

Made Me, another of Greene's influential industrialists, is intimidated by the vibrant dancing of youthful couples (103-5), Fischer refers to his wife's favourite music as "caterwauling" (38). In both cases, Greene illustrates the sterility of power, the spiritual barrenness of rank and money which, according to Greene, will not allow life's joys to bloom. Appropriately then, Fischer's great mansion by the lake is called a "Pharaoh's tomb," and both Anna and her daughter escape its dead occupant, finding solace in humbler, less stifling surroundings. The flat in which Steiner and Anna share their music, and the one in which the aging Jones begins a new life with his young bride, represent life, renewal and joy, sanctuaries from the life-denying force of money and power.

That these women die tragically in the bloom of life, just as Jones's first wife is said to have died in childbirth, is perhaps the novel's bleakest expression of the fragility not only of life, but of the love of life. Yet if such a love is opposed by the love of money and power, one is reassured by the endurance of Jones and the eventual demise of Fischer. For although he initially contemplates suicide following Anna-Luise's death, Jones remains to testify to the beauty of her life, and the ugliness of Fischer's, to the power of life's joys, and to the corrosiveness of avarice and excessive ambition.

Confronted with the death of Fischer, God's apparent embodiment on earth, Jones decides against suicide.

> Evil was as dead as a dog and why should goodness have more immortality than evil? There was no longer any reason to follow Anna-Luise if only into nothingness. As long as I lived I could at least remember her. I had two snapshots of her and a note in her hand, written to make an appointment before we lived together; there was the chair which she used to sit in, and the kitchen where she had jangled the plates before we bought the machine. All these were like the relics of bone they

> keep in Roman Catholic churches. Once as I boiled myself an egg for my supper, I heard myself repeating a line which I had heard spoken by a priest at the midnight Mass at Saint Maurice: 'As often as you do these things you shall do them in memory of me.' Death was no longer an answer--it was an irrelevance. (139-40)

In the absence of God, memory, like a holy relic, the memory of simple love, inspires in Jones the faith necessary to endure. The egg, the symbol of resurrection and re-birth reminds Jones of the belief in Christ expressed in the Catholic Mass, a faith renewed in the ritual of remembrance. The rituals of his own life will preserve his faith not in the love of Christ, but rather in the love of Anna-Luise, a love just as renewing for Jones, an agnostic, as Christ's love is for the Catholic. The few physical reminders of Anna-Luise's existence attest to the simplicity, and yet joyful life that she and Jones briefly shared, one which contrasts with the acquisitive, ultimately joyless life that Dr. Fischer embodies.

In Monsignor Quixote, a less bleak, more hopeful novel than Dr. Fischer, faith is again affirmed in the shadow of power, and life's simple joys are confronted with power's excesses. We find Quixote and his Sancho Panza, Enrique Zancas, the former Communist Mayor of El Toboso, debating the merits of Catholicism and Communism as they travel through modern Spain in Quixote's Seat 600, his Rosinante. The novel is a comic version of The Power and the Glory, but here the institutions of control, the Spanish *Guardia* and the Catholic Church, or perhaps more accurately the *Opus Dei*, appear deceptively more absurd than threatening. In his usual manner, Greene posits these institutions against the humanism he has always embraced, and casts both as organizations of ideologues seeking the repression of the innocent human joy that Quixote and Sancho represent, as well as

the lively debate they share.

Through their debate Greene delineates the importance of doubt, suggesting that faith without doubt is a very empty kind of faith, and that such doubt is the ultimate source of brotherhood among men. Quixote thinks that "sharing a sense of doubt can bring men together perhaps even more than sharing a faith. The believer will fight another believer over a shade of difference: the doubter fights only with himself" (59). Therefore the institutions which demand faith without doubt may ultimately cause strife among their followers. Greene thus illustrates that the individual quest for meaning is opposed to the rigid ideology of the Catholic Church and the Soviet State, power blocs which traditionally demand faith without doubt and an adherence to strict rules.

The opposition between the simple joys of life and the power blocs that corrupt them is perhaps most succinctly expressed by a tiny episode in which the Monsignor and the Mayor sit down to lunch beneath a hammer and sickle painted crudely on the ruined wall of an outhouse. Quixote objects, remarking that he would have preferred to sit beneath a cross. "What does it matter?" Sancho replies, "The taste of the cheese will not be affected by cross or hammer" (46). The good life transcends ideological constraints. Perhaps this is why Quixote and Sancho consider themselves survivors, a "Catholic in spite of the Curia," and "a Communist alive in spite of the Politburo" (204). The bureaucracies of Church and State, the enforcers of ideological conformity, know nothing of the good life from which true spirituality and brotherhood spring.

The Monsignor's final adventure occurs when he comes upon a religious festival in a small town in which a statue of the Blessed Virgin, clothed in banknotes donated to

the Church, is carried through the streets in a lively procession. Quixote stops the priest leading the procession and says, "This is blasphemy." When the Priest and his followers demand that Quixote step aside, the Monsignor begins ripping money from the statue, throwing the banknotes into the crowd and onto the ground. The statue crashes to the earth, and the Monsignor and Sancho make their escape, pursued by the *Guardia*. The episode illustrates that faith is corrupted by money and power, that spirituality is sometimes transformed by organized religion into something vulgar and corrupt. The true spirituality of Quixote is mistaken for blasphemy and his destruction of the statue viewed as a crime. The power of the Church and State conflate in the *Guardia*'s subsequent pursuit of Quixote for the crime of blasphemy.

In the end, Quixote is indirectly killed by the *Guardia*. In the delirium that precedes his death, the Monsignor says Mass with imaginary bread and wine, and places an imaginary host on Sancho's tongue, before finally collapsing. This final tableau of the flawed Catholic priest administering the sacrament to the Communist non-believer who kneels before him in an act of love and friendship is Greens's supreme expression of the transcendence of a faith based upon love rather than ideology, upon the restorative potential of the individual imagination rather than upon the concrete symbols of an institution which denies such imagination.

Like the final separation of Jones and Anna-Luise in Dr. Fischer, the death that separates Quixote and Sancho is strangely life-affirming, an affirmation growing from earthly love.

"Why is it that the hate of man--even of a man like Franco--dies with his

> death, and yet love, the love which he had begun to feel for Father Quixote, seemed now to live and grow in spite of the final separation and the final silence--for how long, he wondered with a kind of fear, was it possible for that love of his to continue? And to what end?" (256)

Men who wield destructive power, men like Franco and Fischer, are Evil that dies, and love emerges from the shadow of such power, just as it lives and grows in the memories of Sancho and Jones. In the end, love is more enduring than the power which seeks to crush it.

NOTES

(See Bibliography for complete listings of the works listed below)

INTRODUCTION

1. Ways of Escape, p. 58.

2. The Other Man, p. 87.

3. Ibid, p. 88.

4. Ibid, p. 81.

5. Bertrand Russell, Power, p. 9.

6. George Woodcock, Writers and Politics, p. 143.

7. Yours Etc., p. 25.

8. "The Virtue of Disloyalty," in The Portable Graham Greene, p. 609. Greene first expressed this view in 1948 in Why I Write, a pamphlet co-authored with V.S. Pritchettand Elizabeth Bowen.

9. Ibid.

10. Rollo May, Power and Innocence, p. 20.

11. Paul Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, p. 37.

12. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Will to Power, p. 411.

13. Albert Camus, The Rebel, p. 13-14.

14. Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge, p. 74.

15. Rollo May, Power and Innocence, p. 144.

16. Ibid, p. 20-1.

17. Greene briefly speaks of his childhood difficulties in Lawless Roads and at greater length in A Sort of Life. Norman Sherry's biography, The Life of Graham Greene, is likely the best source of information on the subject of Greene's childhood.

18. Captain Segura in Our Man in Havana makes a similar observation: "One never tortures except by a kind of mutual agreement" (151).

19. Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge, p. 72.

20. The Other Man, p. 117.

1 POWER AND JUSTICE IN IT'S A BATTLEFIELD

1. The Other Man, p. 18.

2. Ways of Escape, p. 22.

3. Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge, p. 90.

4. Ibid, p. 90-1.

5. Ibid, p. 50.

6. Ibid, p. 151.

7. Ways of Escape, p. 19.

8. Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge, p. 98.

9. The Other Man, p. 155.

10. Rollo May, Power and Innocence, p. 48.

2 POWER AND CRIME IN A GUN FOR SALE

1. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Will to Power, p. 411.

2. Albert Camus, The Rebel, p. 23-4.

3. Ways of Escape, p. 56.

4. Ibid, p. 54.

5. Ivan Melada, "Graham Greene and the Munitions Makers: The Historical Context of A Gun for Sale," Studies in the Novel, 13, Fall 1981, p. 310.

6. Ways of Escape, p. 54.

7. Yours Etc., p. 74.

8. Ibid, p. 196.

9. The Other Man, p. 109.

10. Gerald Bull was a Canadian-American arms manufacturer notorious for having collaborated with the CIA in the illegal sale of arms to South Africa, thereby preserving that country as bulwark against Communism. Bull is perhaps best known for his efforts to sell Iraq a "super-gun," an endeavour which eventually precipitated his assassination under mysterious circumstances. See Kenneth R. Timmerman's The Death Lobby: How the West Armed Iraq (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1991).

11. Grahame Smith, The Achievement of Graham Greene, p. 127.

12. Milan Kundera, The Unbearable Lightness of Being, p. 5.

13. Greene refers to his "loathing of uniforms" in The Other Man, p. 86. Since Greene is a great supporter of the individual, uniforms must appear to him as the ultimate symbol of conformity and totality, regardless of the political affiliations of those who wear them.

3 POWER AND INNOCENCE IN THE QUIET AMERICAN

1. "The Virtue of Disloyalty," The Portable Graham Greene, p. 610.

2. Reprinted in The Other Man, p. 76.

3. In his letters to the press, Greene frequently inveighed against things American, and especially against American intrusions into the political affairs of Cuba, Haiti, and Vietnam. For instance, in a letter to *The Times* in 1961, Greene is critical of the continuing American belief in a "Third Force" in Southeast Asia (Yours Etc., 104-6). Elsewhere, Green condemns American and British support for Batista's regime (Yours Etc., p. 109-11), and opposes American support of Duvalier in Haiti (Yours Etc., p. 130-31).

4. The Other Man, p. 93.

5. Ibid, p. 117.

6. Rollo May, Power and Innocence, p. 49-50.

7. Ibid, p. 53.

8. Ibid, p. 52.

4 POWER AND KNOWLEDGE IN OUR MAN IN HAVANA & THE HUMAN FACTOR

1. Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge, p. 131.

2. Ibid, p. 133.

3. The Other Man, p. 30.

4. Ways of Escape, p. 206.

5. The Other Man, p. 183.

5 CONCLUSION: POWER IN THE TWILIGHT

1. Maria Couto, Graham Greene: On the Frontier; Politics and Religion in the Novels, p. 197.

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